

**EXCLUSIVE POLL: SEX, DOUGHNUTS AND DON CHERRY**

# MACLEAN'S

CANADA'S WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE | [www.macleans.ca](http://www.macleans.ca)

DECEMBER 27 2004

**DOUBLE ISSUE**

**CANADIAN  
OF THE  
YEAR**

**ATHENS GOLD MEDALLIST**

**CHANTAL  
PETITCLERC**

**+**

**2004 IN WORDS  
AND PICTURES**

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A silver Acura Integra is shown from a front-three-quarter view, driving on a dirt road. The car is kicking up a cloud of dust from its front wheel. The background is a bright, hazy landscape with hills in the distance.



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## THE YEAR OF PETITCLERC

Chantal taught us that the best response to adversity is to focus on excellence

**IN OUR FAMILY**, Christmas remains a big deal—but New Year's Eve doesn't have nearly the resonance it once did. These days, the kids are too young to stay up late, and they get up far too early for their parents to want to cope with the next day's fallout of being awake past midnight. And besides, Jim 1 scores an artificial Christmas tree (not for behind such events as children's birthdays, the start and end of each school year, the first soccer game, or

and the last weekend at the country place.

Everyone has dates or periods in life that they mark as turning points—births and deaths of family members, anniversaries, or more unexpected but still crucial events. In the case of Chantal Petitclerc, three numbers worth noting would be 13, 18 and 34. The first is the year when she lost the use of both legs in an accident, the second is her age when the run the high school skip ahead teacher who convinced her to take up swimming to build up her strength—and helped launch her on a new athletic career. The third is how old Chantal was this year (she turned 35 on Dec. 15) when she won five gold medals at the 2004 Paralympic Games in Athens—capping a sensational year of top finishes at a series of international events.

That extraordinary level of achievement constitutes a large part—but not all—of our reason for choosing her as the 2004 Maclean's Canadian of the Year (page 26). Excellence in any field is always to be celebrated. When it springs from a response to adversity, as in the case with Petitclerc's handling of her accident, it becomes even more special. This was, by any measure, a remarkable year for a young athlete by individual Canadian—especially women—and our list of finalists reflects that. Author General Shafiq Fraser, Lucie Robitaille, the United Nations high commissioner for human rights, the wonderful actor Nicole Marano.

Then there's football great Patrick Cormier, a unique case. He coached the Toronto Argonauts to the winning touchdown that culminated in a Grey Cup win—a victory that epitomized the Canadian Football League's own triumph over comeback from the troubles of recent years. Petitclerc's role model for all ages, a girl blessed with one of the world's

“It was a great year for Canadian women—and also for an almost Canadian we need Pinot! Cheers.”

This was also a year for Canadians to reflect on controversial issues—and the importance of being gracious once they're involved. The U.S. election is over; it's time to focus again on what unites our two countries rather than what divides them. Why, in Canada, it's also time to dial down the heat on the debate over gay marriage. Its legalization is real, in some open-minded circles, the end of traditional marriage as we know it. That happened when no such divorce became commonplace and effectively guarded the concept of "til death-do us part" wedlock. You can support the idea of gay marriage—or I do—but accept that the sentiments of those on the other side are no less genuine and heartfelt. Happy New Year to everyone—and may you continue to be upbeat whether you get all you want or not.

Anthony Witen-Smith

PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL LEON FOR THE EDITOR'S LETTER

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"With the passing of Pierre Berton, a part of Canada and a part of me has died, too. I often thought of Berton as the greatest governor general we never had." —Paul Wilby, Ottawa

#### Warring factions

I am so proud of the citizens of Ukraine who have finally risen up to fight for their rights and speak up for democracy, honesty in government and an end to the old style of corruption ("Rise up, Ukraine," Cover, Dec. 13). I got a lump in my throat watching the crowds hailing the civil and singing the Ukrainian anthem. How I wish my late father, so proud of his Ukrainian heritage, had lived long enough to see it.

Daria Bekasova-Sims, Vancouver

I am happy to learn that other Canadians consider Ukraine's election and following turmoil as an important event. Thank you for your support of democracy and fairness. Yury Kozachenko, Toronto

Maclean's biased and partisan reporting of the Ukrainian crisis is not in keeping with what one would expect from a national magazine. It is hard to believe that the superb organization and legacies of the demonstrators are merely spontaneous. The question of who is funding and sponsoring them needs to be investigated. The protest arena, the rich banquets, the three hot meals a day for thousands, surely must have taken some pre-planning and lots and lots of money. The Liberal/Kuchma government should be congratulated for refusing to be provoked by a threatening mob and to give democracy rather than mob rule, a second chance. Neil Stoenkowski, Winnipeg

Events in Ukraine have implications that go beyond that country. World wars have started for less.

Neil Stoenkowski, Winnipeg

#### Polygamy vs. same sex

In response to the story written about the power struggle in the Mormon community of Canada, B.C. ("The battle for Bourneville," Religion, Dec. 13), I would like to remind readers that we live in a country whose government recently said it would introduce legislation to allow the legal marriage of same-sex partners. To those who may



be outraged at the practice of polygamy in Canada, I ask, "Where do we draw the line?" In a society that has come to accept gay marriage, I ask, "Two men? Two women? One man and more than one woman? What is the difference?"

Amanda Howdell, Vancouver

I don't know which is more disturbing, the behaviour of these Mormons who exploit and abuse women and children in the name of religion, or being exposed to stories about them and having no recourse. The worst is the insouciance and power mongering of these tyrants in a land beyond belief, and so hypocritically transparent that one can only pray that they'll be struck down by the very

#### How Canada can help A suggestion for easing the pain in Darfur

Dr. Eric Headley's "Insider" (Dec. 13) about polygamy could go further, with a little power of Wapiti, not to be used in the courts. Here, they visit schools here after a tragic death in Darfur, where every year, everyone has been hit by death or rape, massive healing is required. "We are known for our generosity," says Dr. Headley. "Let us be known for healing, too."

God they claim to worship. The hypocrisy is mind boggling.

Ma Beck, Georgetown, Ont.

#### Inside Russian politics

Alexandre Trudeau writes stories that are very compelling and educational ("Soviet Chief Maslov, Nov. 23). Trudeau's praise of his father's Russian friend, Alexander Yakovlev, who helped former president Mikhail Gorbachev end Communism and design glasnost, is also very compelling. Ideal socialism is so good in ideal democracy, both systems of government need to rid themselves of greedy leaders.

Cy Polakoff, Vancouver, B.C.

It is one thing to draw around and later view people, as Alexandre Trudeau did ("Down and out," Russia, Nov. 28), and another to write a piece that carries an analysis of the problems and difficulties that represent modern Russia. Where is the evaluation of the Russian spirit that has endured centuries of exploitation, human misery and savage, dictatorial regimes? Trudeau refers to the erosion of democracy in a nation that has never known democracy in the first place. Where is the insight?

Richard Hampton, Niagara Falls, Ont.

#### Protesting George W. Bush

Your story about President Bush's visits to Ottawa and Halifax ("He's no Churchill," Politics, Dec. 13) failed to mention even a word about the big protests. In Halifax, more than 4,000 peaceful demonstrators filled the streets carrying a multitude of handmade signs condemning many Bush administration policies, but especially the Iraq war and the steel-trade reform plan.

Marlin Hayes, Ontario, N.S.

That was nice that we fed President Bush our beef. Did we make him sit on our chairs made from our softwood lumber, drink our water from Lake Ontario and hand him napkins made from the shredded Kiyoto accord? Vince Ghidella, Hamilton

#### No stripper shortage

I can't understand why the government is making such a big deal about the government's program to bring stripper into Canada ("Strippergate," Up Front, Dec. 13). After all, strippers who come to Canada go to be strippers, while doctors and engineers who



## OUR EARS ARE BURNING. OR IS THAT JUST THE ASPHALT?

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## THEMAIL

come to this country got to be cab drivers  
and laborers

Tom Hollingsworth, Glenora, Ont.

### Canada's champion

It was Pierre Berton who really discovered  
and invented a vibrant and interesting  
Canada ("Remembering Pierre Berton,"  
Tribune, Dec. 13). Berton wasn't just a dandy  
history writer—he believed in living history,  
a Canadian history that Canadians could  
relate to.

Donna Lee Carver, Ottawa

It brought a tear to my eye to hear of Pierre  
Berton's passing. He made me proud to be  
Canadian.

David Milner, New York City

Many of us grew up with Pierre Berton, the  
black-and-white images flowing from *Post  
Page* Challenges, *The National* Drivers im-  
printed in our heads. Some of his writings  
engendered our wrath, yet he proved to be  
our conscience whether we liked it or not.  
He brought our diverse past into the present  
and confronted us with it. He made us  
realize that we had much to be proud of  
and left us with more than nostalgia. We will  
miss him.

Peter Bognitz, Toronto, Ont.

### One man's morals

In response to Peter C. Newman's "Upstart  
the 'moral' squad" (Nov. 23), the truth is that  
Newman and other self-described (jettison-  
ed) liberals have been pushing their own brand  
of morals for years. Now that the Christian  
Fundamentalists who support George W.  
Bush are promoting a different kind of  
morals, these liberals go up in arms. Chris-  
tian values include a strong work ethic, an  
emphasis on family and strong communities,  
and the belief that we are in the world  
for something more than self-gratification. Also,  
Christians for years have young Canadians  
significant as leaders in social, political, church-  
men and Christian charities. Maybe we are not  
so secular as Newman would like us to believe.  
David Campbell, Toronto, Ont.

Peter C. Newman is being on target. He is  
quite right to be so—Lam, too, particu-  
larly after our last election. The U.S. may well  
be on its way to democracy. As an 80-year-old  
who grew up during the Great Depression,



Berton 'lived in a living Canadian history'

I cannot recall any time in the past that I  
have felt so disheartened by events  
Sid Kibbey, Irvine, N.Y.

### Making it better

I am a first-year student at Queen's Uni-  
versity who used your rankings to examine  
the choices I was considering just a year ago  
("University rankings '04," Cover, Nov. 15).  
Although the addition of the graduate sur-  
vey was a great idea, I believe Maclean's can do  
even more to enhance its annual report.  
Firstly, more about student life at a univer-  
sity would be welcome. I chose Queen's over  
some of the equally prestigious competitors  
because of its amazing student environ-  
ment. Secondly, you should consider rank-  
ing graduate and professional schools. Sim-  
ply getting your bachelor's degree is often  
not enough; further education at a master's  
or doctoral level, or at a professional school,  
is pursued now more than ever.

Michael Obermair, Kingston, Ont.

### Apology:

In our Nov. 8 issue, we incorrectly re-  
ported that Canadian Olympic swimmer  
Brenda Hayden was beaten and injured  
by Athens police while leaving a night-  
club before he finished his race. In fact,  
the incident happened one week after  
Ms. Hayden's last race when he inadvertently  
bumped himself in the neck of a  
confusion between police and pro-  
testers. Our apologies.



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## MACLEAN'S BEHIND THE SCENES



### A NATION IN THE MOOD

Now in its second decade, Maclean's annual year-end poll continues to ask personally Canadian questions. Should the government spend or save? Are we happier? Prouder? How many of us have sex during the intermission of *Hockey Night in Canada*?

Perhaps not every question is a familiar one. Instead, this year's survey adds lightheartedness to Maclean's annual economic and political barometer. One question, for instance, asked respondents to indicate their preference for snacks, sex or *Coach's Corner* between periods of *Hockey Night in Canada*. Another had them choose their favourite desert island companion.

The keeper of this year's results, Senior Writer Jonathan Gathhouse (above), welcomes the jocular addition to the Maclean's partnership with publisher The Strategic Counsel. "It's a poll, not *Question Period*," says Gathhouse. "Adding cultural questions to the mix can only complement our unique understanding of the national sentiment."

If anything, whimsical questions remind us just how distinct our culture is. Says Gathhouse: "On the big issues, most Canadians know how the provinces and age groups will break down. We already understand our differences, informing them which provinces prefer sex over snacks or Don Cherry reminds us, in a fun way, that our national fabric is as unique and robust as ever."

The underside of that fabric, it would seem, has a hint of satire.

Read about Maclean's 21st annual poll in the Dec 27/09, 3 double issue. For complete results visit us online at [www.macleans.ca/web/specials](http://www.macleans.ca/web/specials).

Help shape what's inside Maclean's by registering as a member of the Maclean's Advisory Panel at [www.macleans.ca/aps](http://www.macleans.ca/aps). For further information about this article, contact [behindthescenes@macleans.ca](mailto:behindthescenes@macleans.ca).

## Find the money

with David Buch, author  
of *The Automatic Millionaire* and  
originator of 'The Latte Factor'

### FINDING SIMPLER WAYS TO SAVE FOR YOUR RSP



Best-selling financial  
author, David Buch,  
helps Scotiabank cus-  
tomers discover the  
simpler steps that lead  
to big financial goals.  
It's time to get

people to have the 'Right bank account' where they go 'A-to-Z', says David. "A simpler way to save." I believe that you need to see yourself first—say, one hour a day of your income. And you need to do that automatically."

David Buch points out:

- **paying yourself first**, automatically—putting away the first hour's earnings each day—can yield astounding results. Save \$75 weekly, in 30 years you'll have a nest-egg of \$152,810 assuming an average rate of return of 7%.
- **when you contribute to an RSP** plan at work you'll enjoy the benefits of tax-deferred savings, your taxable income and you'll begin saving for a comfortable retirement automatically.
- **this year RSP has the best opportunity for growth with small, well-diversified investment choices.**

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# THE MACLEAN'S READERS' CHOICE

## HEALTH CARE ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR

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Over the past month, readers have voted on [macleans.ca](http://macleans.ca) for the entertainer, athlete, news event and health care advocate of the year.

## The results are in!

### Your choice for the Health Care Advocate of the Year

#### 1 Pierre Guertin

Developed a drug that could help those with spinal cord injury to walk.

#### 2 Carlton Gyles

Found a simple way to detect the source of E. coli-tainted water.

#### 3 John Kastner

Emmy Award-winning director of *Rage Against the Darkness*, a documentary on the institutionalization of seniors.

Thanks to all Maclean's readers who voted!  
What was the news event of the year?  
Who were your favourite entertainer and athlete of 2004?

Visit [macleans.ca/readerschoice](http://macleans.ca/readerschoice) for more results from the Maclean's Readers' Choice poll.

# MACLEAN'S



# Breakthrough



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## Mansbridge on the Record

**ILLUMINATING TALES**

A newsmen's notebook reveals the importance of light—or its absence

**THE END** of another year and a few more entries from my 2004 travel notebook, all of which have a common theme:

It's quite amusing how lighting seems to have transformed the look of the National War Memorial to the heart of downtown Ottawa. When the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier was put in place beside the memorial in May 2000, the cartoon decided on some dramatic nighttime effects—beams of light shining down from nearby buildings directly at the tomb. And on the special for all memorial, built in the years after the First World War, they added a splash of light as well.

To make broadcast recordings in Ottawa, I often fly in from home late at night and arrive downtown shortly after 1 a.m. Ottawa is normally a quiet town, and especially so at the wee hours, but there is something quite startling about seeing the war in the way it is now. In fact, the change seems to have brought a real soul to the spot.

In the past, the place had been dark and forbidding—and that feeling seemed to spread into the daytime hours as people often walked by hurriedly running their hands. Now, though, I often see people pausing, staring and thinking—and isn't that what a memorial is supposed to do?

■ Here's a behind-the-scenes glimpse of Air Force One from George W. Bush's recent visit to Canada. The President's arrival is a fairly 747 with all the bells and whistles—everything from a shower to a workout area to storage for 2,000 meals (just in case an emergency forces it to stay air-

**“Giant lights, worthy of a Hollywood movie, set, lit up the President's arrival—and we could still see it after we left the Ottawa area.”**

borne, refueled in mid-air, for days on end). And of course there's constant security—from shielding to protecting a nuclear blast to the 24-hour watch it receives while sitting on the ground.

Later on the night Air Force One was parked on the airport tarmac in Ottawa, military passengers fast asleep in bunks were woken up, we were given special permission (needed for security reasons) to take off in a small prop aircraft to go to Hull in time to cover Bush's arrival scheduled for early the next morning. In the process, we flew almost immediately over the President's plane and it was quite the sight. Bush's flight, worthy of a Hollywood movie, lit up the huge aircraft from all angles, and because it was a clear night, we could still see it for some time after we left the Ottawa area. The lights also highlighted those who were standing guard in strategic locations around the plane. I expected to see Harrison Ford walk into the shot at any moment in someone's potted “action”

■ And then there's the aspect of lighting, something brought home to me earlier this year in Afghanistan in the main Canadian military base. Because the camp is considered a potential target of al Qaeda, there are strict rules about lights at night. The basic one is that if you have a light on inside your tent, it better not be visible from the outside. And if, in the middle of the night, you have to travel outside your tent, get used to doing it by touch and feel, or in the dark with the aid of one of those tiny nightlights I made for an incoming 5 a.m. 30-minute shift to the chow hall.

No matter what holiday you're celebrating in 2004, and no matter the style of lights you're making with, here's hoping you have a happy and safe one.

*After Mansbridge is Chief Correspondent of CBC Television News and Anchor of The National. To connect: letsmansbridge@rc.ca*

## Canada in Words

**I think so many of us are lost!**  
In February, Hamilton Liberal MP JAMES BARNES became the eighth MP in two months to switch parties. He lost the nomination.



**I don't know what happened. I'm an athlete. I live on the edge.**

**HAND-LOCK HARTER**  
PROFESSIONAL FENCING  
about his Olympic career

**I'm not a mean-spirited person, and I'm sorry for what happened.**  
Vancouver forward TONY HORTON on the sucker punch that hurt the national game.

**Something just snapped in a moment of utter irrationality.**  
SVENND KJØRSTAD, admitting he stole a diamond ring.

**Europeans, Americans, Canadians, we all sink. We all die. We're all the same.**

**People talk!** ALEXANDER MORGAN, a Russian, takes on Don Cherry.



**They sentenced me to death once so anything else is a plus.**

**STEVEN SUGGOTT** on Ottawa's decision to re-examine his 2003 conviction for murder after a technical error.

**I hope somebody who the reprinting word for words to that remorseless prick because I don't think he would read it.**

**Sgt. LOREN FORT** in the U.S. pilot who killed four Canadians and wounded eight, including Ford, in the 2002 friendly fire incident in Afghanistan.

**It's as if the biggest tree has fallen down.**

**Writer JUNE CALLWOOD** on the death of Pierre Berton.



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## 2004 IN REVIEW | UPFRONT

Mary Janigan | ON THE ISSUES



### MY NEW YEAR'S WISH

That MPs stop taking cheap shots and start behaving responsibly for all Canadians

ADRIENNE CLARKSON was in London in April 2002, representing our nation at a Queen's Golden Jubilee celebration, when the learned lord in Canadian soldiers' wood oil by U.S. "friendly fire" in Afghanistan, were being studied in a U.S. plane on U.S. hospital in Germany. The Governor General decided a prominent Canadian simply had to be there to greet them. Her British hosts, scrambling to meet her last minute request, got her to that German terrace just as the soldiers were landing. She followed them to hospital, counselling them, getting their names and the names of their next of kin. Then she phoned each man's relatives: "Isn't that something," miracle woman Jane Clarkson, who still chokes as she recounts her freshly died. It is.

Minority governments are strange creatures: they bring out the best and the worst in politicians. The Governor General is most decidedly not perfect, she does live heavily by our mouth. But she has performed her one, containing job with grace and dignity, and MPs should not have delivered a very public rebuke by clipping more than \$400,000 from her current budget. Since the Department of Foreign Affairs payment of her controversial travel costs, the cut to her budget are simply political grandstanding that will disrupt her duties to us.

Paraphrase the opposition parties and the handful of Liberal MPs who chastised her are too concentrated to the meaningless theatre of minority government. MPs bluff and puff but, when the final vote is called, discipline prevails only in the governing party.

"In a minority, the words that are spoken do count for something they do have meaning," argues University of Guelph political scientist Patrick Royer, a former Tory MP. "Many representatives are not acting responsibly. Words are our own signature."

The personalities do indeed extend. Some MPs understand their duties. Treasury Board President Reg Alcock and Tony MP John Williams are working together to handle problems in the estimates. As Alcock says, "the magic of consensus" means every MP must act responsibly—or the government could potentially fall. Other MPs don't get it. Liberal Roger Galloway, for one, tried to cut the last slice of this year's funding for the finance registry—which could have originated it. Yet, this long gone registry was so transitory of money, if only because, since the mid-1990s, the RCMP was already recording sales of new long guns. But the registry now holds useful records for all guns, and using systematic weapons. Galloway eventually backed down in mid-month—and the funding remains.

Second thoughts for MPs are especially crucial these days because some close Martin advisers are itching to find a pretext to call another election. And, despite the sobering lesson of the last vote, those advisers don't risk lightly to warn that voters would punish any irresponsible deed. Liberal MPs should look for wisdom to former Liberal cabinet minister Barney Dumas, who always behaved with partisan grace: "It's a balancing act," he says. "Some MPs are unhappy with the leader, or they have been pushed over for promotion. Others are patient. But MPs have a responsibility to support a party—and a Parliament." Exactly so, here's a wish for 2004: that MPs will reflect before they bluster—because their opinions now matter. The voters are listening. ■

Mary Janigan is a political and policy writer. mary.janigan@mediacentre.ca

### The World in Words

"Our enemies are innovative and resourceful, and so are we. They never stop thinking about new ways to harm our country and our people, and neither do we."

GEORGE W. BUSH responds, again.



"Well, there was no sex for 34 days." California Gov. ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER is getting the cold shoulder from his wife, TV personality Maria Shriver's Kennedy, after he spoke on behalf of President Bush at the Republican convention.

"We just had a poll in our country where people decided that the foreign policy of the Bush administration ought to stay in place for four more years."

BLAKE, asking Canada, responds to a question about global jobs showing the unpopularity of his policies.

"Can we tell them no? When I talked to the president, he was loaded."

Newly released transcript of U.S. secretary of state HENRY KISSINGER in October 1971, putting off a crisis call to the British PM by boss Richard Nixon.



"We must raise our hands and yell so loud that all of Europe will hear."

Ukrainian pop star ZHUKHRA lends her voice to opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko's Orange Revolution.

"No, the puppy didn't get charged. Should've got a steak dinner."

Florida police Sgt. JOHN LATES, after a man trying to kill puppies was shot when one of the dogs stepped on the guy's finger.

# 'WE'VE HIT OUR STRIDE'

The PM tells JOHN GEDDES about his trips, his trials and his most touching moments

**AFTER A TURMULOUS** 12 months in power, Paul Martin rides through the door looking like a man with no time to spare. He chooses an armchair in the modest upstairs sitting room at 7 Bileas-Gate, a government guest house near his 24 Sussex Drive residence, shows away his official photographer, and leans into the task of defending his record. A year and a day after being sworn in as Prime Minister, he seems eager to talk foreign policy, but it also reads with answers on hot domestic issues, from same-sex marriage to Senate appointments. Over a half hour, though, he relaxes—at least a little. After all, this is a break of sorts from the bright lights set up downstairs, where he is taking two days of year-end TV interviews. He even puts his feet up on a coffee table to discuss how he has had to adapt his micromanaging style to the demands of running the government.

**The sponsorship affair, a grueling election, leaving to run a minority government—has this been your toughest year in politics?**

There's no doubt there were some rough patches in the first part of the year. But I think that since the election we've hit our stride. The health agreement was a major achievement. We've done most of the work required on the most contentious agenda. We're well advanced on the child care agenda. These are all transformational files.

**In that health deal, you agreed to give the provinces a lot of money. How can you be sure they'll deliver shorter waiting lines?** Essentially, we're establishing national benchmarks. The provinces are going to be establishing national objectives. They will be judged in terms of those objectives. And, of course, all governments, including our own,

will be held to account by Canadians. Ultimately, we're all responsible to our voters.

**You've spent an extraordinary amount of time abroad recently. Any lasting memories?** I don't know if you saw the pictures of the two schools I went to in Africa. To go off into a corner and talk to a little girl—in one case the girl spoke French, and I think we communicated. That's not an accident; these are real live kids, who are so eager you want to pick every one of them up and take them home. Many are orphans or have lost brothers and sisters. I'll tell you, that touched me like you wouldn't believe. We've got to change the world because, for those kids, it's not far they should grow up in this world.

**Such experiences inform your foreign policy? Look, we live in a world where out of every**

billion in new population, 34 million are in the wealthy West and 550 million in countries where the average income is less than a dollar a day. That kind of uniformity will not last. Sooner or later, there'll be a worldwide collision against it. Our children will pay the cost because we didn't deal with it.

**Not being on the road so much tired you out?** No. On every one of these trips, we accomplished a great deal. I suspect if I came back from a trip and it was a bust, I'd be tired. I've also got a pretty good constitution and I can sleep well on the plane.

**You're contemplating having Canada play a role in the upcoming Iraq election. Do you think the vote should be postponed beyond Jan. 30, until there's greater order there?** It seems to be soon. That is an Iraqi election. They're going to have to make a judgment call as to their ability to hold it.

**At home, same-sex marriage will surely be remembered as one of 2004's biggest stories. You straggled personally with the question. Do you now wish you'd been a leader or a rather than following the courts?** Five years ago, when there was a vote in the House during which a majority of MPs, including myself, voted for the traditional



defence of marriage, the peers had no made the decision that that was contrary to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The Charter is a living document that evolves with society. All we have done is simply allow the references to the courts to play out. Now, it is our responsibility to carry that forward.

**But shouldn't elected politicians, not appointed judges, drive this sort of social change? Do I believe government should be ahead of the curve? Absolutely. Having said that, it's the courts that interpret the Charter.**

**Social Development Minister Ken Dryden is expected to deliver big things in early childhood education in 2005. Why are you focusing on nationwide daycares rather than just helping parents, no matter how they choose to raise their young kids?**

First of all, this is not daycare, this is early learning and childcare. We want to make sure that children are ready to go to school as soon as they go to formal school, regardless of income. What Ken Dryden is doing is setting up that national program with the provinces. This doesn't mean we shouldn't be doing other things, but we are breaking new ground here. But should one have a broader view? Of course.

**In the election campaign, you promised to add 5,000 troops to the armed forces. Some say that would cost too much. Is it doable? It's doable, but over the course of the mandate. There's not a money there today, but I think those troops are required. Unfortunately, you can't do it overnight. It's more important to do it right.**

**Sticking with defence, what more do you need to know to come to a decision on whether or not Canada should join the U.S. national missile defence program?**

We have certain principles, one of which is non-negotiation of space. We have to make sure we have a voice, and not an advisory voice. We understand the Americans are putting this up for their defence, but there have to be structures that say we have a voice. Until we have the answers to those questions, we're not going to make a decision. People are saying, "Make the decision now." Well, I'm sorry, I'll make the decision when it's in Canada's interest to make the decision. I won't make it before.



Harper with his caucus in the House lobby, well a budget battle looms about another election?

**There are now 15 empty Senate seats. Last month, Alberta voters unofficially elected three candidates for their province's vacancies. Do you plan to appoint those candidates? We do consider, but the final decision is ours, and that's the way it goes. And that's the way we'll proceed until such time as we have comprehensive Senate reform.**

**'I'VE had to accept that there are only four or five issues I'll be able to engage in fully. I've got to be much more targeted.'**

**As finance minister, you were known for taking a personal role in handling not just about every decision, and often having heated arguments with your officials. Have you had to adjust your style as Prime Minister? As I said to get in there and debate things, roughly every once and a while. When I was at finance, 10 people could get around a table, have a disagreement, make a decision and go with it. Now there aren't 10 people I can sit around with and argue the thing. It's too big.**

**So, what I've had to do—and I've had to learn this a little bit—is accept that there are only four or five issues that I'm going to be able to engage in fully. So I engaged fully in**

health care, and now I've withdrawn somewhat. I'm always going to be fully involved in foreign policy. I'll get involved in child care and crime, but then I'll withdraw and move on to the next issue. Two got to be much more targeted in the degree that I'm really in there.

**There have been reports that 24 Sussex Drive is run down and drafty. Is it true that you and Mrs. Martin have to bundle up to all in the kitchen for breakfast?**

Basically, my life is, I come in late at night, I go to bed. I get up in the morning and go to work. The house has a lot of character, and I don't notice anything else about it.

**Are you concerned that your government could fall this spring, maybe over the issue of the budget?**

We're not looking for an election. We want to govern. If we go into an election early, it will be because the opposition has pushed us into it. Would I prefer to have a majority government? Yes. I think the economy would benefit if we didn't have this uncertainty about when we're going to have an election. But I think things are working out fairly well. It will be interesting to see how the budget unfolds.

**We read much of our interview with Paul Martin, and we're interested in his politics.**



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# 2004 IN REVIEW | **CANADIAN OF THE YEAR**

## CHANTAL PETITCLERC

This champ has shown true grit and an adherence to principle, writes CHARLIE GILLIS

**IN WHEELCHAIR RACING**, as in many sports, strategy will only get you so far. You can "dink" far a while in a competitor's wake, preserving energy until you're ready to make your move. Or you can use your position against the men trailing you, forcing them to the outer lanes where they have to cover more ground. But at some point, every race comes down to willpower, and in 15 years of competition, Chantal Petitclerc has earned plenty of it. When the finish line looms and her opponents' arms are flailing, she drives

from some unknown reserve of strength and determination, swiftly dishing the hopes of officers who thought they could keep up.

The same qualities that bring victory on the track make the 35-year-old Montrealer *Canadian of the Year in 2004*. But her athletic exploits are only part of the story. Last month, the country saw a different dimension of Petitclerc, when Athletics Canada told her she'd be sharing an award for the year's top track-and-field athletes with able-bodied hurdler Pheasant Pelicieux. The decision was patently unfair: as the Paralympian in Athens, Petitclerc won in something five gold medals and smothered three world records. Pelicieux had an excellent season, but crashed in her Olympic final. The decision should have been a no-brainer.

So Pelicieux quietly refused, and thus began a kind of war on. Athletics Canada pleaded,

she reconsidered; they presented, she declined. "I felt there was less to how far you can compromise," she now says. "By accepting, the message I'd be sending to everybody was that this was all my Paralympic medals and my world records were worth."

Why sport bureaucrats would risk slighting one of their most approachable and successful athletes remains a mystery. What is clear is that Petitclerc has a lot more to lose by engaging in a public feud than they did. Perched by a window in her Montreal condominium, she assesses the type of front-page publicity she'd get for swapping eyes, a newspaper article and a spokesperson's lawsuit (she whoops when told she won't have to share her *Canadian of the Year* honors in Montreal's). Those qualities—along with her reputation for class—have made Petitclerc's home life cozy in Quebec, landing her an enviable sponsorship with Aloha Inc. and

a wacky television gig driving prosthetic lottery numbers. On reflection, she says, that image might have been at risk had she come across as merely self-serving. One newspaper, the *Ottawa Citizen*, did publish an editorial accusing her of poor sportsmanship. "But I think most people know I was making a valid point," she says.

To put it mildly, in the days immediately after the story went public, more than 400 messages of congratulations poured into Petitclerc's e-mail box (she received only one negative message), while several newspapers issued editorials in her favor. Not surprisingly, Petitclerc has struck a deep chord with many of Canada's 3.4 million disabled people. "We need people like her to speak up," says Chantal Benoit, a veteran of the national women's wheelchair basketball team. "What she says affects what a lot of the other athletes are thinking." Adèle Morel-Whelan, chair of the Council of Canadians with Disabilities: "When you see someone of this character and this stature say she's unwilling to accept second class, that speaks to all people with disabilities."

Enthusiasts are not alone: Petitclerc can live with, because she's been setting her own

Petitclerc became the first female to win the title of Canadian of the Year at age 35.





push since she lost the use of her legs at 13. She and a friend were using an old, heavy beam door to build a bicycle ramp, and it fell on her while they were trying to prop it up, breaking her spine. But a high school phys. ed. teacher soon introduced her to swimming, and by 1988, she was competing in wheelchair athletics. She was often the only woman at her events, but Pentecost didn't mind. "While she can't recall the first time she raced, she clearly remembers the first marathon ever passed in a race. 'He was,' she admits with a smile, 'a bit heavy'."

By 1992, she was competing internationally, winning the Paralympics in Barcelona. At the Sydney Games in 2000, she learned to fight for her due, winning an appeal before the Court of Arbitration for Sport over her gold-medal performance in the 800 m event—a result declared void because of a collision near the back of the pack. Canadian officials successfully argued that the crash had no material impact on the race.

A hint of chaos to come? Perhaps. But Pentecost is wont to dispel notions that she's

on some public crusade. She would have been just as happy, she says, if last month's controversy never made the press—if Athletics Canada had accepted her refusal and let the matter drop. She has nothing but respect for the discipline's impact on Pelletier, who, after a spectacular crash in her 100-m final in Athens, probably didn't need the headline. "People tell me I should be honored to be named with Pentecost, and I am," says Pelletier. "She had nothing to do with it, and she had a good year. She's very worthy of the prize, and she'll receive it many times ahead."

But the die is clearly cast, and Pelletier has been pleased by an apparent swiftness of future at Athletics Canada's end. The weekend following the award ceremony, she attended the agency's annual planning meeting, where the dilemma of how to compare Paralympic and Olympic results was a key topic. There'll be no easy fix, as even disabled athletes acknowledge their less popular sport can't be viewed on a par with highly coveted Olympic events (though with more than 200 countries participating,

wheelchair racing definitely can). Some officials advocate a grid system, in which results are graded based on the number of competitors, the number of countries competing, and whether records are broken.

In the meantime, Paralympic officials are not too subtly teasing Pelletier for the Canadian Sport Award for top female athlete, an honor open to competitors in all fields. No Paralympians has won one, and the odds look steep: she'll bump against such luminaries as cyclist Lori Ann Maestri, a gold medalist in Athens, and curling legend Colleen Jones. Last week, a panel of sports journalists confirmed the bias toward able-bodied competitors by giving over Pelletier for the Lou Marsh Award, meant to recognize Canada's outstanding athlete, in favour of kayaker Adrian Van Rooijen.

But you can't win without trying, and Pelletier has shown that there's honour in fighting for what's rightfully yours. Boldness, it's been said, has grace, magic and power in it. Of this, our 2004 Canadian of the Year is living proof.



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## CANLIT'S CATALYST

**ALICE MUNRO** long ago surpassed the benchmarks for national icon status in CanLit—age (she's 73) plus distinguished body of work (where to start?). She could have spent the last decade pottering as her garden and still be among the most revered writers in the country. Instead, consider how noteworthy Munro has been in the past two months. Her new story collection *Runaway* won the Giller Prize and was shortlisted for the Governor General's Literary Award. That makes two Giller's for Munro, to go with three Governor General's from *Runaway*'s erstwhile lead in Munro's usual place on CanLit.

After Jennifer Jones, more unusually, it has also appeared on the *New York Times* list.

This particular coup is the result of a front-page story in the paper's Sunday book review section by American writer Jonathan Franzen, a lengthy endorsement that began "Alice Munro has a strong claim to being the best fiction writer now working in North America." And last week Munro was the only woman and the only living author named among the first four Canadians

to be published in the Penguin Modern Classics series. (The others are Mordecai Richler, Timothy Findley and Robertson Davies.)

The eight stories in *Runaway* are vintage Munro—lucid, restrained and piercingly honest—about women characters the Giller jury called "locally Canadian, remarkably ordinary, and at the same time startlingly universal." This Canadianism was also on constant theme in her Giller acceptance speech. Munro recalled working years ago in her then husband's Victoria bookstore. Customers routinely told her they didn't buy Canadian books as a "matter of pride." "This was a pretty general attitude at the time," she said. "But not now." And when the crowd stood in applause, it was a tribute not just to *Runaway*, but to Alice Munro's role in that remarkable change. **DAVID BEAUMONT**

Munro's characters are CanLit, but also as strikingly universal.



## MORAL AUTHORITY

**A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO** in The Hague, Louise Arbour dropped in on the set of a made-for-TV movie about her life. "It was a lot of fun but also pretty surreal, as I didn't stay long," says Arbour, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights—who's being played by Canadian actress Woody Watson in the CIV special. "It's mainly a piece of fiction, but I'm flattered by the screen they chose to play me."

Not that Arbour has any time to be offering caustic suggestions to TV producers. Since stepping down from her post as Supreme Court of Canada justice in June and moving to Geneva, she's been busy assessing the world's most violent regions. She's spoken out against the human rights violations in Pakistan, and also announced a fact-finding mission in Sudan's war-torn Darfur region. With some 70,000 Sudanese civilians dead and some 1.6 million driven from their homes, the UN has called it the world's worst humanitarian crisis. "The trip gave me a personal ownership of the issue," says Arbour, 57, who set up a work force and called for bolstering UN staffing in the region soon after returning home. "The rape victims like nothing I've seen. The

shooters are so primitive and the level of deprivation so extreme. And yet, there is an amazing spirit among the children and women. I have been on the ground, meeting the people who deal with the crisis every day and see a lot of fuel for optimism."

With the UN job, she's also gained another national stage and the ear of every important world leader. "I can't just make orders," says Arbour. "Moving forward happens on a consensual, not on a coercive

basis here. That's one of the challenges." In fact, she knows the game well. This is her second high-profile posting with the world body, having first made waves in 1999 as the UN's chief prosecutor who indicted former Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic for war crimes (the subject of the TV special).

Arbour has some serious concerns about the state of human rights, but says she is confident her office's agenda is on the right track. As for her own career path, she gives credit to her days at an all-girls school in Montreal. "The school wasn't exactly a glacial society," she says, "so maybe I've just been starved for internationalism ever since."

JAMES BEECH

## SUM BOYS GROW UP FAST

"I **THOUGHT** we were going to die," says Sum 41 lead singer Derrick Whibley, while recounting a trip to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where fighting erupted while the band was filming a documentary with War Child Canada. A near-death experience will change anyone—even four young men with a penchant for drugs, strippers and rock 'n' roll.

When Sum 41 broke out of Asia, Oct. 1, and onto the international music scene back in 2001, Whibley, Dave Kadish, Jason McCaslin and Steve Jocz were poster boys for suburban angst, with concerts that ran not much deeper than a T-Guns Saucers. But they recently realized that rebellion musicians should, and are expected to, give back. "We wanted to help out and do something that was more hands-on than play a charity show or do a compilation CD, so we thought let's go to an actual war zone," says Whibley. "We chose the Congo because the war literally had been about the control of its resources, mainly coltan (cobaltite-bearing) it's used in electronics, like cellphones and computers, things we use everyday—that's what people are dying for."

After talking to child soldiers and rape victims and experiencing the terror and devastation of fighting firsthand—they were trapped in a hotel

with mortar rounds going off outside and see through gunfire to be executed in a tank—the guys in Sum 41 have matured in their music, personal lives and priorities. And it turns, they're learning that young, hard-to-mold demographics to do the same. "Everybody should try and do something that's good that doesn't benefit them," says drummer Jocz. "You don't even have to go to the Congo or anywhere, you can donate money, read a newspaper, start looking at the world in a different way."

SHAMIA BEECH





## PINBALL WIZARD

"IF YOU EVER WANT to live me down, just give me some paperwork," says Michael (Pabell) Clemens, head coach of the Toronto Argonauts, when asked why he and his wife Diana have yet to apply for Canadian citizenship—despite the fact his three daughters are Canadian and his family's been living in the Toronto area for 15 years. "A while ago, I adapted a friend's motto, which is 'I'm American by birth and Canadian by choice.' Morally, I'm already here. Citizenship is an eventuality. I'm hoping to get it done in the near year."

Football and good words go hand in hand for the always smiling Clemens.

Until then, Clemens will remain one of Canada's favorite adopted sons. He's heavily involved in more than a dozen charitable organizations—including the Special Olympics, the Children's Miracle Network and Horizons for Youth, a Toronto shelter for young people. But not surprising, Clemens, 39, is humble about his work off the field. "It's a large degree of overrated," he says. "People talk about it so much that I think it robs some of the joy. The most wonderful part of giving is doing so without any attention or recognition."

But it's hard not to notice Clemens's wide smile at countless functions every year. In fact, he finds joy in just about everything. So much so that when growing up in the projects in Durham, N.Y., his mother would occasionally tell him to stop smiling. "It actually was an issue soon after I started coaching," says Clemens. "I had an interesting conversation with a fan who didn't think my smiling on the sidelines was appropriate. 'You just need to know, I am who I am.'"

When Clemens's Argos beat the B.C. Lions in the Grey Cup, the former Toronto running back earned his fourth championship ring, giving him plenty of reasons to show off his pearly whites. But then as well, Clemens steps back from the spotlight. "The guys on the team deserve all the credit," he says. "They tried to push me to the front a couple of times during the award ceremony, but I just said this is about the players. I get so much satisfaction seeing the players on the stage. As a player, you win once, but when you win as a coach, you win the Grey Cup 40 times." It's no surprise we'd like to place Clemens as our own. **A.L.**

## OTTAWA'S CRUSADER

AUDITOR GENERAL Sheila Fraser has shined on Ottawa, bringing media savvy to her role as one of the country's most important government watchdogs. In doing so, she's made many of Ottawa's bigwigs hot under their buttoned-down collars, and has become Canada's most popular chartered accountant—especially among taxpayers.

In her search for fiscal truths, Fraser hasn't ever backed down since accepting a 13-year appointment in 2001. Her reports on government action (and inaction) this year have been disarming—raising serious concerns over what she calls overly restrictive privacy laws, the country's security, Health Canada's mismanagement of prescription drugs for native Canadians, and excessive surpluses in employment insurance. But most importantly, Fraser, loaded as a straight shooter and the first female auditor general in Canadian history, has stood strong in the eye of the federal spin-sling storms. Her audit of the Public Works Department's advertising and sponsorship program, released earlier this year, found that \$100 million had been funnelled to Liberal-friendly communications agencies



during a four-year period—without a single benefit for citizens. Fraser, as always, didn't mince words. "It's a blatant misuse of public funds," she said at the time. "Every time I read this report I get angry."

It's pretty obvious the 54-year-old isn't in the business of making friends on the Hill. But her efforts to eliminate waste and corruption in all activities involving the public purse have endeared her to many Canadians. And her relentless analysis on government accountability and effectiveness has even led some commentators to say that Fraser is doing a better job than the political opposition of keeping the government in line. **A.L.**



## NO SLOWING DOWN

JUST WEEKS AGO, Julie Calwood was neatly arrested. She and two other women, Mary Jo Luddy and Jay Kopsow, staged a sit-in at the Toronto constituency office of Citizenship and Immigration Minister Jody Sigo, on behalf of an Erasmian issue which had been refused entry into Canada. The police were prepared to take the women in for trespassing, but 80-year-old Calwood made a last-minute phone call to the Prime Minister's Office, garnering a compromise and narrowly averting handcuffs.

The list of causes the Toronto journalist/author/activist has taken on is enough

to make anyone feel inadequate. She cofounded a women's house (No Men's), a centre for pregnant teens (Jesse's Garden AIDS hospice (Carey House). Calwood has also written nearly 10 books. And even after being diagnosed with inoperable cancer last September, she is not letting any of us off the hook. She's currently working on behalf of the Campaign Against Child Poverty, lobbying in front of Senate committees on various issues, teaching Rick

Meyers to kick a field goal on Monday Report, hanging out with babies at Jessie's—and hoping to take another solitary drive to Florida in her sports car.

Since leaving her cancer, Calwood has refused chemotherapy and has publicly embraced death—but it's having a hell of a time coaching up with her. "My cancer's moving very slowly," she says. "I'm tired, and I don't have energy toward the end of the day. Other than that, I'm okay." So, despite being an expert on ageing—she hosted a TV show on the topic and wrote *Twelve Weeks in Spring*, a non-fiction account of a group of women looking after a cancer-stricken friend—Calwood herself needs very little help. "No, I don't need any caregiving," she says, "except for people to be nice to me—and that's happening." **S.K.**

Forget a cancer—Calwood got a centre car million of light left in her

# OF SEX, SNACKS AND GRAPES

We'd like to get busy between periods of *Hockey Night in Canada*, writes JONATHAN GATEHOUSE, and we pick Pierre Trudeau as our top Canadian

**IT'S NOT A PLEASANT** mental picture, but for those who worry about Canada's "productivity gap," the news is encouraging. When Maclean's, in our sexual year-end poll, asked 1,000 Canadians what they prefer to do during intermission on *Hockey Night in Canada*—get a snack, watch *Couch's Corner*, or have sex—an ambitious 16 per cent said all three. Sure, the lure of the fridge won out (29 per cent), in part because of the ravages of age and pockets of regional rectitude. But a full third of 18- to 24-year-olds professed a fondness for

**LET'S SAY YOU WERE NOTHING NOBODY WOULD IN CANADA AND HE WOULD INTERMEDIATE. WHAT WOULD YOU EAT?**

6.11 (snack)	29
Watch Couch's Corner	28
Have sex	17
All three	16
Don't know	12

GRAPHIC BY JONATHAN GATEHOUSE FOR MACLEAN'S. \*BASED ON 1,000 SURVEY RESULTS.





Twins tie for top spot with 11 per cent each. (Colne was the choice of 19 per cent in her home province, but only six per cent of men in Quebec would want to be called on a desert island with the indie songbird.)

**WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOURSELF AS EITHER AN EVANGELICAL OR A NON-EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN?**

Yes 14  
No 63  
DK/NA/Ref 23

Alice Munro scores big in Saskatchewan, Gordon Lightfoot still rocks the Atlantic provinces. But names like Joei Macdonald, Neil Young and Leonard Cohen didn't even make the list. Neither did anyone whose name might be unfamiliar to the average baby boomer.

In past years, the Macdonald poll has frequently found that Quebecers stand apart on a wide variety of issues. This year, perhaps reflecting the midwestern blue state dunkum in the U.S., we focused on another part of the population with distinct views, evangelical Christians. Almost one-third of Canadians defined themselves as born-again or evangelicals, with the highest responses in the Atlantic provinces (46 per cent) and Saskatchewan and Manitoba (37 per cent). Asked whether political leaders should use their religious beliefs to guide their actions, most Canadians, 65 per cent, said "never," a number that drops to 49 per cent among evangelicals. On the question of whom you tend to be more comfortable spending time with—a wine drinker, a beer drinker, a pot smoker, or



an abstainer—those who have been saved were a little more inclined to cheer-lead (45 per cent) than the national average (36 per cent). But evangelicals were also more likely to opt for a smoke during intermission (35 per cent), thank Colne as the best (13 per cent), and choose the free coffee and doughnuts (19 per cent).

Finally, on the human remains issue that recurs every holiday season, almost two-

thirds of us we could stand to lose some weight. Thirty per cent would like to drop between one and 10 pounds, 17 per cent would reduce by 11 to 20, and 16 per cent want to shed more than that. A word to the wise: when Hockey Night in Canada finally returns to the air, try to limit yourself to two stretches during intermission.

janeth.gibson@macdonaldpoll.com

**DO YOU THINK POLITICAL LEADERS SHOULD BE USING THEIR RELIGIOUS BELIEFS TO GUIDE THEIR ACTIONS AT ALL TIMES, SOME TIMES, OR NEVER?**

	% of all respondents	% of those who identified themselves as evangelical or born again Christians
At all times	6	18
Some times	24	39
Never	65	43

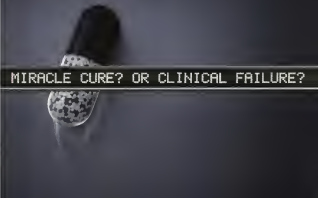
**WHAT WOULD YOU SAY IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE MARTIN GOVERNMENT SO FAR?**

Nothing	22
Canada U.S. relations	4
Debt reduction	4
Staying in power	4
Other domestic issues	4
International affairs	3
Health care funding	3
Investigating sponsorship scandal	3
Federal-provincial relations	2

**WHICH ONE OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS WOULD YOU PREFER THAT PAUL MARTIN MAKE AS HIS PRIORITY?**

Improving social programs	30
Reducing the debt	18
Focusing on upgrading the military	12
Working to increase Canada's influence in the world	10
Investing in cities	9
Having a closer relationship with the U.S.	8
Giving a greater role to NGOs	2

## MIRACLE CURE? OR CLINICAL FAILURE?



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## THE NATION'S MOOD

From personal finances to views about the U.S., a snapshot of what we think



Over the years, the annual Maclean's year-end poll has asked a series of standardized questions to track how the country's mood may be shifting. The following shows this year's results (in % of total responses), and comparative data for years past.

#### WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE FACING CANADA TODAY? THE TOP THREE:

	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Health care/hospitals	25	27	26	26	25
Unemployment/economy	18	14	14	25	21
Nuclear issues	6	6	4	4	3

On this year's poll, the general categories of government/political, taxes/GST, environment, Canada-U.S. relations, education, and social services each received 6% of the response. Only 2% of respondents identified terrorism as the most crucial issue facing the country.

#### ARE YOU MORE OR LESS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE FUTURE THAN YOU WERE A DECADE AGO?

	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Total optimistic	39	30	26	39	38
Much more optimistic	0	7	0	0	13
A little more optimistic	21	23	10	22	27
Not changed much	32	30	32	32	26
A little more pessimistic	21	28	27	20	23
Much more pessimistic	15	14	14	11	13
Total pessimistic	36	39	41	37	37

IN THE LAST 35 YEARS, WOULD YOU SAY YOUR FINANCIAL SITUATION HAS GETTEN MUCH WORSE, SOMEWHAT WORSE, STAYED ABOUT THE SAME, GETTEN SOMEWHAT BETTER, OR MUCH BETTER?

	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Total better	28	28	25	38	25
Much better	14	14	14	13	13
Somewhat better	15	14	11	25	12
Stayed about the same	32	33	31	32	36
Somewhat worse	16	19	18	17	18
Much worse	11	11	11	11	13
Total worse	27	29	29	28	31

COMPARED WITH A FEW YEARS AGO, ARE YOU MORE CONFIDENT, LESS CONFIDENT, OR ABOUT AS CONFIDENT OF YOUR ABILITY TO LOOK AFTER YOUR ECONOMIC INTERESTS ON YOUR OWN?

	2004	2003
More confident	42	40
About as confident	37	38
Less confident	19	22

ARE YOU WORRIED A GREAT DEAL, SOMEWHAT, NOT TOO MUCH OR NOT AT ALL THAT THE RISK OF TERRORISM WILL GROW INTO A BROADER RISK BETWEEN THE U.S. AND U.S. ALLIES ON ONE SIDE AND ARABS AND MUSLIMS ON THE OTHER?

	2004	2003
Total worried	70	66
A great deal	31	28
Somewhat	39	46
Not too much	17	26
Not at all	11	12
Total not worried	29	34

#### DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS?

"I am concerned that we are losing our independence from the United States."

	2004	2003
Total agree	40	57
Strongly agree	19	26
Somewhat agree	29	31
Neither agree nor disagree	9	6
Somewhat disagree	25	13
Strongly disagree	16	18
Total disagree	41	55

"As the world's sole superpower, the United States has the responsibility to intervene in the affairs of other nations in the interest of global security."

	2004	2003
Total agree	24	40
Strongly agree	11	15
Somewhat agree	23	25
Neither agree nor disagree	6	7
Somewhat disagree	36	30

"I am prepared to give up some of my freedoms in order to vote last time more effectively."

	2004	2003
Total agree	44	50
Strongly agree	34	19
Somewhat agree	30	40
Neither agree nor disagree	9	5
Somewhat disagree	10	15
Strongly disagree	25	19
Total disagree	44	24

WOULD YOU SAY THE ECONOMY IS HEADING INTO A PERIOD OF IMPROVEMENT, RECESSION, OR IS IT GOING TO STAY THE SAME?

	2004	2003	2001
Improvement	24	23	16
Staying the same	43	42	26
Recession	26	29	58

IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS, WOULD YOU SAY YOUR PERCEPTIONS OF THE UNITED STATES HAVE BECOME MORE POSITIVE, UNCHANGED, OR BECOME MORE NEGATIVE?

	2004	2003	2002
Total more positive	31	23	17
A lot more positive	5	5	7
Somewhat more positive	0	0	10
Not much changed	29	27	46
Somewhat more negative	24	21	37
A lot more negative	24	10	24
Total more negative	48	49	39

WOULD YOU DESCRIBE CANADIANS AND AMERICANS AS ESSENTIALLY THE SAME, MAINLY THE SAME BUT WITH SMALL DIFFERENCES, MAINLY DIFFERENT BUT WITH SMALL SIMILARITIES, OR ESSENTIALLY DIFFERENT?

	2004	2003	2000
Total same	46	43	58
Essentially the same	12	7	6
Mainly the same	32	34	44
Mainly different	23	29	23
Essentially different	31	28	20
Total different	54	57	42



# 2004 IN REVIEW IMAGES

## THE CRISIS IN DARFUR

Hundreds of thousands died in camps or killed on the spot by the Sudanese government, not counting what the United States classified as "genocide."





#### **LIBERAL MINORITY**

Just before the election call in late May, polls showed Paul Martin within reach of a majority. But the Liberals were hurt by the sponsorship scandal, while a good campaign by Stephen Harper moved the spectre of a Conservative government. In the end, the Liberals squeaked back into power, capturing 136 of the 308 seats in the House.

#### **GO, ARGOS!**

A revitalized Canadian Football League ended its season with the 12th Grey Cup in Ottawa on Nov. 21. Under coach Mike (The Bull) Clemons (left), the Toronto Argonauts beat the B.C. Lions 27-15. The victory was especially sweet for veteran quarterback Damon Allen of the Argos—the 41-year-old man, far from his heyday, "I think I can still play the game," he said. He's holding



#### **ASU GRIEVE**

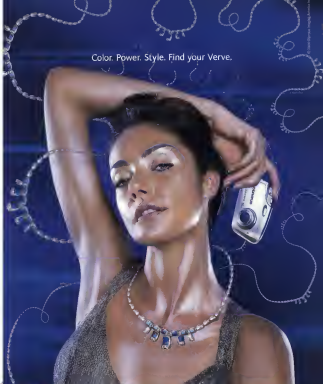
As the situation in Iraq spiraled out of control, the U.S. war effort was further tarnished by news that troops had raped women at the infamous prison where detainee Captain Michael S. Hayes, tortured his own inmates.



**RIGHT TO VICTORY**

After another down-and-dirty presidential campaign, Republican George W. Bush triumphed over Democrat John Kerry to win a second term in the White House.

RONA WILSON



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**OLYMPUS**



## ATTACKS IN SPAIN

Just three days before the general election, terrorist bombings killed 193 people and injured 1,300 on Spanish commuter trains. When Spaniards went to the polls on March 14, they threw out the government of José María Aznar—a supporter of the Iraq war—and voted in Socialist José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, who promptly brought Spain's troops home.



## BESLAN'S HORROR

In a video still that horrified the world, a young boy stands at the camera, giving a shied-off between Chechen terrorists and government forces at School No. 1 in Beslan, a city in the North Ossetia region of southern Russia. Some 334 people died in explosions and gunfire as the incident was brought to a bloody end. But it was later revealed that the boy, Georgy Burdakov, survived the ordeal.

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**UKRAINE'S  
BATTLE**

Thousands of thousands protected the fraudulent Nov. 21 presidential election. The supreme court annulled the result, saying that Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich, the declared winner, must expose in a second runoff with opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko on Dec. 26.


**BLACK DAYS**

Cardinal as chairman of Wall Street International, one-time media mogul Conrad Black watched as his year got worse. Accused by a special committee of the company's board of running a "Venezuela Map Economy" Black was charged with fraud by United States regulators, as his ties to the Venezuelan elite he built were all but severed.


**JANET'S NIPPLE**

Forget war and politics—the biggest frenzy early in the year was over the “wonderful mal-function” that gave Super Bowl fans a glimpse of Janet Jackson’s breast as she danced her halcyon duet with Justin Timberlake. An instantly-viral American version of these trends, CBS apologized, and all the U.S. networks scrambled to appease their more squeamish viewers.



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## 2004 IN REVIEW | IMAGES



### THE AGONY OF DEFEAT

Penny Priddy, the reigning world 1.05-m hurdle champ, was Canada's biggest star going into the Athens Games. So when she crashed into the first hurdle in her final, she was crushed—and the fortunes of the Canadian team sagged a little, too.

THE WARRIOR

WARRIORS | DECEMBER 27, 2004 51



#### NOVEMBER STORM

It wasn't just the snow (as much as 45 in.) and winds of up to 75 mph that had New Englanders upset. Nor what really rankled was that the May 14 storm also brought a massive power outage—the first they'd had to endure in a half-century. "It's unthinkable," said Gary Vachek, a mother of six in Hubley, "I don't live in a Third World country."



#### HURRICANE SEASON

And what a destructive one it was as Charley (left), Frances and Ivan devastated the south. All three hit Florida as the space of a week, the first time since 1961 that three such storms have struck the Sunshine State in a single season. And then there was Tropical Storm Jeanne, which roared across Haiti, killing more than 3,300. As crowds rioted over food, the UN had to send in soldiers.



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# POWER BROKERS

Who's who in Paul Martin's minority Liberal government? JOHN GEDDES reports on the insiders, managers and activists who have the Prime Minister's ear.

**BACK IN THEIR DARKEST DAYS** of 2004, when last winter's sponsorship scandal was raging at its hottest, some of Paul Martin's closest advisers adopted this adage to sum up their strategy: "The only way out of the fire is through the fire." That stoic maxim conveyed their conviction that instead of trying to downplay the scandal, Martin had to address it head-on. That meant appointing a judicial inquiry into allegations of dubious spending under the \$250-million sponsorship program that ran between 1997 and 2003. It also led Martin to hit the road, on what became known as his road to hell tour, to try to make Canadians see him as the solution to political corruption, rather than part of

the problem. And it frustrated Liberals who would have preferred a classic duck-and-dodge response to the crisis—the way Jean Chretien would have handled it.

As a coming year in federal politics draws to a close, Martin's advisers still believe they called it right. They argue that if the Prime Minister had tried sandbagging the flames rather than striding to them, Canadians would never have accepted that he represents change. Others counter that a cooler response might have allowed Liberals to make under the radar of public discontent to a fourth straight majority in the June 28 election, instead of being whittled down to a minority. Nobody will ever know for sure. What's clear is that the Martin government as it now stands was shaped and hardened by the fires of 2004: first the explosion of the

sponsorship scandal; then only two months into Martin's prime ministership, then a humbling spring election campaign for the man once thought a shoo-in for a massive victory, and finally on to the job itself and how to run a minority federal government, the country's first in a quarter-century. No single, overarching framework can capture the governing style of so improvisational a politician as Martin. "If you want

to understand the Prime Minister," says an official who works closely with him, "you have to accept that he's a micromanager." It's impossible to guess when he will plunge with intense interest into a new policy file, promoting it, at least momentarily, to the top of the government's agenda. A cabinet minister says that while Chretien was "chairman of the board, a great delegator," Martin "is into everything." That can lend the impression of chaos to his administration. One day the PM's top concern is, say, the Sudan, the next, he's preoccupied with a sweeping new strategy for Canada's Arctic. Senior bureaucrats, who favour order and hierarchy and, above all, a boss they can easily read, don't always like it. "There has been a fair amount of bureaucratic grumbling," admits one minister.

But Martin's way isn't nearly as haphazard as those grumblers sometimes imagine. What has emerged this fall is a system with three key layers. Closest to Martin are the insiders in the Prime Minister's Office, the government's political nerve centre, and the Privy Council Office, the main mechanism of the most powerful federal bureaucrats. Next comes the handful of veteran cabinet

members who are old Martin allies, relied upon to manage the government's day-to-day operations. Finally, there is a cluster of senior ministers who, though not personally close to the Prime Minister, have been assigned high-profile ministries like health, childcare and crime, which Liberals plan to run on centre the next election. And under-lying the entire machine, even fueling it, is what some experts view as an understated but no less vital force: the government's reach into policy areas once dominated by provinces—making Ottawa a more direct force in the lives of Canadians.

## THE INSIDERS

Ever since Martin left his lucrative business career to try his hand at politics, pundits, lobbyists and politicos alike have

obsessed over the machinations of his unusually loyal band of bureaucrats and employees. Since he was widely assumed to be prime minister-in-waiting, those closest to him were viewed as a shadow PMO. But when he took power on Dec. 12, 2003, the transition didn't quite follow the script. Neither Jean O'Leary, his top aide during his key years as finance minister, nor her partner David Horke, who headed Martin's political operation, took PMO jobs. Both remain influential outside advisers, reportedly in frequent contact by phone and email, but they are not at the Prime Minister's side day in, day out—and in politics, proximity matters.

Instead, the central figures in the PMO are Tim Murphy, his chief of staff, and communications director Scott Reid, who has

emerged, arguably, as the operation's linchpin. Other PMO officials say Reid's role as Martin's chief spokesman sometimes leads casual observers to underestimate his substantial impact on policy, since spinners are generally supposed not to be thinkers. As well, Reid often projects an assured, adolescent quality that can also feed that misperception—he's a comic-book buff who talks about Spider-Man creator Stan Lee in terms other than hard-core political press release for, say, Pierre Trudeau.

Yet Reid's clout is clear. He's part of the very small group who attend Martin's key morning meeting, along with Murphy and principal secretary Helene Chablain-Schwarz, who is not widely viewed as a powerful player. And he is the only one whose function would be making decisions behind closed doors and delivering the message to the media. Sometimes the way with that message can be provocative, as it was when he warned that Newfoundland Premier Danny Williams would "pay for it in the long run" for dealing with Martin over offshore energy revenues. The Prime Minister called Williams to apologize for the apparent threat of seces-

sion. Reid, though, remains an under-estimated PMO force, nobody has more access to Martin.

The second unexpected man of influence in Martin's office is Privy Council clerk Alan Hineshelfer, Ottawa's top bureaucrat, who also attends all the important morning meetings. A seasoned bureaucrat with expertise in social policy and federal-provincial relations, he was appointed minister of ministers by Chretien. This alone assured that he was viewed with deep suspicion by Martin's crew. During the early weeks after they moved into the Langevin Block, the imposing 19th-century office building across from the Parliament Buildings that serves as headquarters to prime ministers, numerous wagers that Hineshelfer would be pushed aside in favour of



Kevin Lynch, who had been Martin's deputy finance minister.

But Henshiff surprised the gossipers by bonding with Martin's gang. They now speak of him with a respect that borders on reverence. "Alex made himself indispensable to them," says cabinet minister. "He brings an acute political sense about how things will play out." That was particularly true of the \$18-billion health deal Martin cut with the province in September. The way Henshiff worked his network of contacts in provincial government was a key to securing the agreement—the signature accomplishment of this government to date—solidifying his status as the resident sage of the Martin operation.

## THE MANAGERS

Henshiff, Reid and others in the Prime Minister's inner circle tend to focus on the most pressing issues of the moment. They have to stay nimble to keep up with their boss's ever-shifting focus. To make sure the rest of the government's business moves along, Martin leans heavily on a troika of long-time supporters: Deputy Prime Minister Anne McLellan, House Leader Tony

Valeri, and Finance Minister Ralph Goodale. Their jobs are largely defensive: keep the government out of trouble—whether money problems, parliamentary upheaval or operational disruptions—so others can get stuff done.

Valeri worked closely with Martin as Finance's chief parliamentary secretary, but

**AFTER the settling-in period following the election, expect this government to speed things up in 2005**

steering the government's major strategy in a volatile currency situation puts him in a much more demanding position. If the government falls before Martin meets it, Valeri stands to take a lot of the blame. He was considered a risky choice for House leader, since he was not an expert on the intricacies of parliamentary procedure. But the fact that so far the opposition parties have not made life miserable for the Lib-

erals in the Commons, as many had predicted, has bolstered his credibility. And Valeri's status isn't hurt by the fact that he gets frequent calls from Martin, including when the PM is out of the country, for updates on everything from section in the House to the latest scuffleback on how Martin's ministers are doing.

Valeri puts more emphasis, though, on his working relationship with the opposition's House leaders. "My counterpart is always my number one choice," he says. "I call on the weekend. It's not a Monday to Friday relationship." Despite the open lines of communication, Valeri's job is to get much tougher in 2005. A recent sign of things to come: the opposition's success in pushing through a motion to ask Commander Adrienne Clarkson's budget. More such cuts, some symbolic and others substantial, could emerge as a key opposition tactic for scoring points and harassing the Liberals in the coming months.

McLellan acts as Martin's chief pointing officer inside cabinet. With the Prime Minister on the road through much of the fall in a series of globe-trotting trips, she was often on her feet defending the government in the House. Perhaps more importantly, though, she chairs the cabinet operations committee. Martin has created a raft of new cabinet committees, but "she," as tradition is, is the most powerful. It meets twice a week and virtually all government business must win its approval. Mission up the committee is a forum for details, sometimes very lengthy, discussion early in the life of a new idea. That's a big change from the Chrétien era, when initiatives often didn't receive serious consideration until much later in their development, when they were past public interest.

One insider says the ultimate aim is to use the operations committee and Valeri's office to coordinate the timing of new legislation as if they were "product launches." Chances of cabinet announcements were belated to draw attention to government policy themes. But that sort of sophisticated time management is still more a vision than a reality. "It has taken some time for ministers, their staffs and departmental officials to figure out what their roles are," McLellan says. As well, the real position of the government will only become clear when the 2005 budget is rolled: nothing

comes easily unless funding is guaranteed.

That's where Goodale, the third of Martin's three solid cabinet managers, comes in. A smoothie budget consolidation process, leading to the release of the annual fiscal plan in February, is crucial to keeping the government on track. And in a minority situation, passing the budget, and the spending measures that flow from it, will be a crucial test in the House. Goodale needs to deliver a blueprint that doesn't hand the opposition anything that might prove as popular enough for them to grab on going to the polls. He has Martin's confidence, but can expect plenty of input from a Prime Minister's Office steeped in the budget-making process.

## THE ACTIVISTS

Leading the Liberals through the fire of the sponsorship scandal and then the election campaign was a job for Martin's most trusted aides. "It pushed people in light," is how one strategist puts it. And when Martin faced the daunting task of making a minority government work, he also naturally turned to known quantities like McLellan, Valeri and Goodale. But when it comes to forging ahead with new initiatives, Martin is leaning on fresh talent. Remarkably, he handed all three of his top priority files to rookie cabinet ministers who are not members of his inner circle and who all tend to lean left politically, appealing to the PM's progressive Liberal instincts, rather than his business-oriented side.

Health Minister Ujjal Dosanjh did the advance work on the health accord, which Martin and his team finalized in a three-day negotiating blitz with the premiers, including a busy night of phone-flashed calls at 24 Sussex Drive. Still, Dosanjh is left with the task of making sure the key concessions Martin squeezed out of the provinces—a system for increasing and monitoring reduction in wait times for health services—has real teeth. John Godfrey, the minister of state for infrastructure and communities, is negotiating a deal to transfer billions to cities and smaller towns under a "new deal," which is meant to dramatically increase federal involvement in urban and municipal issues. And Social Development Minister Rita Dyck is in talks with the provinces over a promised federal early childhood thrust, with a controversial plan



for a nationwide daycare system at its core.

Taken together, these three desks represent a historic expansion of Ottawa's reach into the lives of Canadians. Christopher Dunn, a political science professor at Memorial University in St. John's, has caught the attention of policy wonks recently by writing about how Ottawa is

going to have to respond." Far from disavowing Dunn's view, another Liberal official said, "He's got it right, except that we're going to accelerate it."

Acceleration may be the story of the Martin government in 2005. The months following the election last year marked a settling-in period. The modest orientation thrown us around the base, the managers figured out how to run things for him, the activists got an inkling of what the policies he favors. In the new year, the system has to deliver. Dunn's growing pressure to be ready for an election. The chances of the Liberal government falling will become greater after the budget is delivered in February. It might generate policy debates sooner enough for opposition parties to consider closing ranks and forcing a vote. As well, the Conservatives will hold their founding policy conference in March, after which they will be better positioned to severely contest any and every proposal. It adds up to a quivering pace of government action, in the face of a stiffening opposition. If Martin's crew walked through fire in 2004, they should be ready for the heat to rise again in 2005.

**THE activists pushing the policies that the Prime Minister favours are all left-leaning rookie cabinet ministers**



# WALKING A FINE LINE

Running a national conservative party is a balancing act, writes PAUL WELLS

**THE ANSWERS** to some questions are so obvious they hardly seem worth asking. But suddenly, one wing of Canada's political commentators has become transfixed with just such a question:

Is Stephen Harper conservative?

Of course, he's Conservative—leader of the Conservative Party of Canada, and of Her Majesty's loyal Opposition. But Harper once sat in Ottawa as a member of Reform, a party that used to accuse the Brian Mulroney Conservatives of being as eager to

prender to Quebec and Ontario that they had sold out the very meaning of conservatism. Some of them used to chant: "Liberal! Tory, same old story."

And now some conservative commentators are leveling at it a near charge at Harper: "Conservatism is dying in Canada," *Stercora* Corcoran wrote in the *National Post* on Nov. 30. "Not just dying, it is being murdered and deliberately removed from the political scene by strategists." Corcoran's investigation placed Harper at the scene of the crime, since the June election, he wrote, the Conservatives had "drifted ever further away from the core conservative values that once seemed to animate Mr. Harper."

Corcoran's article of denunciation reinforced Harper's refusal to win the Quebec

government against cracking down on the English language, his support for "the Liberals' massive cash transfer to the provinces" for health care, his silence on the Liberals' state daycare scheme, and his ambivalence on Canadian participation in U.S. missile defense.

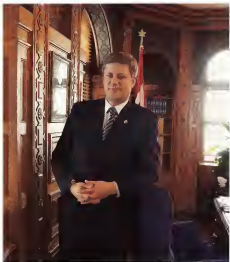
Two weeks later, Corcoran's *Post* colleague Andrew Coyne rounded the list of complaints, taking issue with Harper pro-

ffering a parliamentary vote on gay marriage instead of a referendum, and trying, albeit while the Liberals prepare to sign yet another massive subsidy cheque for broadband.

Conservatism aren't the Conservative leader's only alpacas. Speaking off the record, some Reform-era veterans of Harper's own caucus say they've been disturbed by the boss's new on-air bent: "It's very different," one MP said. "We're beginning to understand that the fight for the party's soul never stops."

Members of the old Reform caucus concede that they're likely to stick with Harper—despite grudgingly Leo Morneau, who sat as a Reform and Canadian Alliance MP from 1993 to 2000, says he's "kind of disenchanted" with Harper's attempts to reposition himself as a "professional politician." Still, he adds the strategy probably won't cost the Conservatives any serious seats. "What else is there to vote for?"

In a recent interview at his office in Parliament's Centre Block, Harper disputed the thesis that the Conservatives are becoming less conservative. But his own remarks



made it clear that, for now, he's demanding more flexibility from the party's Reform wing than from its Tory wing. Criticism from the right, he said, comes from "the usual suspects" and his "allotment been very specific: They're usually attacking me more through conjecture on what I might do than anything I've actually done."

So what's he doing? Trying to reassure "a certain kind of voter who could have voted for us" in last June's election, "that didn't. They just weren't sure what to believe." Negative Liberal ads had something to do with that, he added—but "I think we actually compensated by some things we did that fed into it." What sorts of things? Characteristically, Harper seems to be specific. "You know the things that happened

months and now in his own party are attacking Harper or moving to the centre

People get off message and things like that."

Clearly Harper was referring to widely reported comments about abortion, gay marriage and the Charter of Rights from Cheryl Gallie, Randy White and other so-called conservative members of his caucus—comments that worried up derailing the Conservative campaign.

So if restraint is Harper's prescription for the next conservatism, what's the payoff? A shot at power, Harper says. "I don't see anybody out there who's asking us to go back and have two parties and have a separate Alliance," he said. "I don't hear that from anyone. Not a single person."

What's the difference between the old Reform and the new Conservatives? "I think it's less policy than culture," Harper said. "The Reform party was a protest party. This party isn't merely a conservative party, it's a party whose mission is to govern the country." Part of that mission is an unprecedented attempt to reach out to voters in Quebec. Harper travels to that province frequently. His long-term goal, he says, is "to see the party actually establish some roots in the province of Quebec, not have someone else's organization or sentiment on a short-term basis."

The Quebec wing of the Conservative party, composed largely of former Mulroney-era Progressive Conservatives, has begun to hint at the prospect of its return to the fold. At a November policy meeting, Quebec Conservatives passed resolutions that were closer to the old Tory position than to Reform doctrine on criminal justice, subsidies for big industry and even, to quote one resolution, "the possibility of reforming Canadian federalism."

Harper chalked the resolutions up to healthy debate. "There's no point asking people what their opinions unless you're prepared to hear what it is," the Quebec wing will have to persuade the rest of the party at its national

convention in March, he said.

Leading a national conservative party, Harper said, is a balancing act. "If you decide to adjust to a wider electorate, the tendency is parties like this are not just to be looked at to your own supporters, but fairly for the support base to continue to diminish because you continue to have more and more ideological truce of party."

But the opposing danger, Harper said, lies in reaching out too agreeably to every constituency. "If you don't care about your principles—if you are actually embodied by your core supporters—you'll quickly find that you have thin and insignificant support everywhere. You're everybody's second choice. And then you're not on the map either."

# PIETY AND PROFITS

On a pilgrimage to Mecca, ADNAN R. KHAN encounters forces vying for his soul—and wallet



I NEVER EXPECTED to find opulence in the City of God. Piety, certainly—there's enough of that in Mecca, and that's to be expected. But opulence? Never crossed my mind. It feels odd: a pilgrim dressed in simple pilgrim wear, bare shaven close, feet adorned with 50-cent rubber sandals, loquacious about in the lobby of the Intercontinental Hotel overlooking Islam's hallowed sanctuary, sipping cappuccino while just for laughs, that irreverent Canadian comedy show, plays unfolded on the well-tuned plasma TV. Odder still when you consider how my journey to the holy city of Mecca and Medina began, a fortnight when I first decided to set out on a pilgrimage.

It's an awkward statement to say I was nervous there, a reluctant recruit considering the spectre of a nation thrashed by post-9/11 Islam. I studied its steady assault, learning the prayers, history and rituals a pilgrim is expected to know. That knowledge has been essential. But the fear? Unfounded.

That's not to say Saudi Arabia isn't a dangerous place. A growing number of foreigners have lost their lives in the kingdom.

A spate of bombings and drive-by shootings that began in 2000, killing 26 people in one May 2003 incident alone, makes the point: outsiders are not welcome. As a Pakistani-Canadian, I was a

stranger, a watermelon with western flesh. But in Mecca and Medina, at least, there were enough Pakistanis around that I didn't feel so out of place in Islam's holy land.

And as my journey progressed, it became abundantly clear that in Saudi Arabia, post-9/11 Islam comes side-by-side with rampant, western-style consumerism in a bizarre dialectic. Religious police and soapbox capitalists vie aggressively for people's attention: a competition for the soul and the wallet. But while these forces may seem at odds, they do have a common denominator—the House of Saud.

Take, for instance, the ruling dynasty's role in the business of pilgrimage. Turns out

It's not easy to visit Saudi Arabia's holy cities during hajj, and it's not free visit.



it's big business indeed. Not exactly what I expected, but that was naive, not only previous pilgrimages being so the core dwelling of a 17th century Sultan in northern Pakistan. The difference is probably as simple as the numbers—every year, more than a million visit the cave of Baba Ji; millions, on the other hand, come to Mecca and Medina, a fact not overlooked by the country's leaders. A pilgrimage tour operator put it this way: "At some point, people realized the economic potential in developing the holy site." He refused to specify who these "people" were, but with a nod and a wink he made his point clear: very little happens on this part of the Arabian peninsula without the involvement of the royal family.

At the mosque in the heart of Medina, between the grave of Muhammad and the original structure in which he prayed, pilgrims have supplanted the Prophet's mosque. Expansion in the rooms, and then for decades, when the Saudi royal family began enlarging the complex, they spent no expense, piling on time of marble to a mosque that was originally not much more than a hut. They added a forest of minarets (the original

With pilgrimage a big business, poorer pilgrims are being pushed to the margins

building had but one), installed mechanically removable domes and, most remarkable of all, cleared the space around the mosque for the construction of five-star hotels. Because, well, that's where the money is.

"The perimeter of the Mosque of the Prophet is now a monocity of luxury accommodations,"

**I'M STILL moved by this image of people, en masse, forgoing social hierarchies to participate in a communion of equals**

tions, a city-block wide and 10 stories tall for the elite, the pilgrims go to Mecca, the birthplace of Islam, begins here, surrounded by marble and crystal. In the lobbies of their hotels, groups of men dressed in the white, unbuttoned robes that are a requirement for all male pilgrims mill about while porters drag luggage onto waiting luxury

coaches. Hotel employees carry trays of exotic sweets and juices, catering to the women who've just indulged in a shopping spree in the hotel boutiques.

It's a remarkable sight: the contrast between the simply clad men and the fanciful hotel décor, the almost comical image of a tour guide screaming out instructions as if preparing his charges for a trip to the beach. Still, as the procession moves out to the parking coach, I'm moved by this image of people, en masse, reducing themselves to the bare minimum, shedding their individuality and forging social hierarchies to participate in a mass communion of equals.

That, at least, is the theory, what I hope the pilgrimage will be like. In practice, though, things are never so simple. Beyond the hotels, in the relative squalor of the city, poorer pilgrims are systematically being pushed into dilapidated buses by one-time employees of luxury transport companies. A few will bundle over their luggage onto a dirty roadside food stall. Stoked, a Pakistani restaurant owner, shakes his head. "Poor people have been pushed away from the holy mosque," he says. "They don't



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corner. And it shows, in my reaction when I first see the Kaaba, which has one corner made from the sacred Black Stone, which according to Islam, the angel Gabriel gave to Abraham.

As I set eyes on the black-aldraped cube-form building, surrounded by a throng of the faithful, I'm struck with awe. I can't stop looking at it as I perform the tawaf, the ritual circling that is the first rite of the pilgrims. For seven rounds around the structure, I'm transfixed. But after subsequent visits, as I contemplate the remaining pilgrimages rites, its power over me wanes. Other details come into focus: a Saudi policeman with a baton, threatening to beat off pilgrims who might try to pray at a wrong corner. It's the rule: one should only touch and pray at the Yemeni and Black Stone corners. And then there is the mosque itself.

The original courtyard around the Kaaba is made of simple yet elegant brickwork that strikes a chord with the plain geometry of the holy site. Then there are the earth-toned, humble walkways, some inscribed with Koranic verses or arabesque designs that give a feeling of sacred reverence. But Saudi Arabia's royal family has built sprawling extensions to the mosque complex. Strutting through the marble regence, I have the feeling of being on a movie set, that the massive white-marble columns and arched, the diversely high ceilings and tiled ground relief work all just painted plywood. There's no spiritual depth to it, and certainly no meaning beyond the obvious. In homage to the magnificence of Saudi Arabia's rulers.

The carpets adorning the marble floors bear the emblem of the royal family—two crossed scimitars covered with a date palm—even though the House of Saud is the caretaker of this holy sanctuary, not its ruler. Worshipers seem oblivious to this inherent contradiction, or adopt a fatalistic outlook: "I never noticed," one pilgrim tells me when I point out the emblem. "But what can you do?" Others admit a distrust for the ruling family, but only in hushed tones. "The Saudis are all corrupt," one local merchant says. "They profess the true Islam, but live the lives of infidels."

**ON A SATURDAY EVENING**, while wandering around the Kaaba, I happen upon a religious leader addressing a large crowd. The imam, who preaches in Urdu, the official language of Pakistan, speaks vehemently



Muslims around the world pray in the direction of the Kaaba in Mecca's mosque

about the need to purify Islam of innovations. "All that a Muslim needs to know," he intones, "can be found in the holy texts." He then rakes against the Shia, ending his diatribe by declaring "there is no halfway for a Muslim; you are either a believer or an infidel."

It brings to mind the rigid "with-us-or-against-us" stance of George W. Bush following the attacks on 9/11. Perhaps, I think,

**THERE'S** no denying the power of piety. It seeps into you like a drug and settles into your bloodstream as a latent memory.

the Bushes and the Saudis are not so different: both have depended on oil to sustain their fortunes, both appeal to the religious right for legitimacy, and both have a habit of resorting to dogma. But there's a crucial difference: democracy. The House of Saud has ruled for 73 years, and there is no end in sight. Recent moves toward reform have fallen well short of expectations. Reformers continue to be detained, despite the establishment of an official human rights organization in March. And the crackdown on extremists is only a temporary relaxation. According to a September 2004 report by the International Crisis Group, the kingdom's

official acceptance of a person brand of Islam still ensures that Saudi Arabia remains a little breeding ground for radical Islam.

In Mecca, Muslims from around the world tell me that Islam is under attack. "Muslims need to come together," Bashirah, a 21-year-old pilgrim from Ethiopia, says after noon prayer. "That's what makes Mecca such an important place for Muslims. You will never see any conflicts here because there are no infidels. It's only where believers and non-believers mix that there are problems." I point out that in Canada, Muslims and non-Muslims coexist peacefully, for the most part. Bashirah is unconvinced. "Maybe Canada is different," he says. "But the Mus-

lims there aren't as Muslim as us."

Real Muslims? Does Bashirah implicitly mean that real Muslims are unable to live in peace alongside non-Muslims? Few Muslims I know would accept that, but there is a fringe group of radicals that does.

I can imagine these extremists disgustingly looking at the circus atmosphere surrounding the holy mosque. Just to the northeast is one of the House of Saud's palaces towering over the scene. It fits in with the grand hotels that dot the landscape. But here, on the other side of the mosque complex, is a poorer area. Muslims from Africa sell empty plastic jugs for carrying home holy water, two Bangladeshis broiled and over something grilla, making themselves for the pilgrims. Around them, more pilgrims leave their dogs behind, heading for the coolness of the mosque. I wonder how long these humble accommodations can withstand the march of history. Nearby, a similar set of low-to-mid-range hotels has been slated for demolition to make room for more five stars.

**WITH EACH** new construction project, the devotions within Saudi society deepen. But that seems to be of little concern to the elite seated around the mahogany tables in the International Hotel café. For a brief moment I feel out of place in my simple pilgrim garb. But then another pilgrim sits down at the table across from mine. He also orders a cappuccino, and I decide to give in to the facade. Everything is fine, I tell myself. Look around! Isn't it beautiful? ☐



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HONDA



# NO HOCKEY? NO PROBLEM.

You may miss the NHL, but the economy will do just fine without it

**LOST IN THE UPHEAVAL** over the disappointing National Hockey League season is a reality that pro teams are loathe to admit: big-league sports don't matter much. At least, not economically.

Many Canadians will consider that heresy, and for the legion of fans left grumbling at the loss of their beloved ice gladiators, it will seem unfathomable. But the evidence is unequivocal: pro sports in general, and hockey in particular, may have the emotional power

to stir an enormous attraction, but they're insignificant to the health of local economies.

Don't bother trying to tell that to the producers of the local supper-hour news show, though. For the past few months, the NHL lockout no-economic-consequence may have appeared countless times on various media. The *New York Times* recently weighed in with its own take, describing a sad state of affairs: several NHL cities a town in Buffalo, N.Y., where beer bars already in the lurch before it can be sold, restaurants in Columbus, Ohio, saved only by rent conces-

sions from their landlords. All this, we're told, because the NHL has locked out its players' union. It would seem hockey fans are so distraught over the league's labour woes they have stopped eating, and even beer isn't ease their pain. There was a flicker of hope recently when the NHL Player's Association offered to roll back player salaries in hopes of salvaging what's left of the season. So far, however, the owners remain adamant a salary cap is the only route to labour peace. The best in Buffalo will continue to spoil

but that doesn't add up to an economic calamity. The handful of businesses hurt by the lockout are easy to identify. The beneficiaries are tougher to track, but they're out there. Every major independent study of pro sports' impact on local economies has shown that people's entertainment budgets are roughly static, and if they aren't spending their recreation dollars in and around the arena, they'll spend them somewhere else. So even if the arena's empty on turning, oblivion to the spectacle is pushed. The only economic crisis to be feared: the NHL, when its loyal patrons, at least those in Canada, discover that the much night of the week is actually called Saturday as opposed to Hockey Night, and when local governments find out that commuters can live without the NHL. And that's a fact.

Plus, when fans in the Stadio Arena in Calgary are spending their cash elsewhere.



pro team owners would rather keep quiet.

For the better part of a decade, dozens of franchises—in baseball, basketball, hockey and football—have made pitches to governments for loan guarantees, grants and tax breaks aimed at building stadiums or bolstering dormant towns. Those appeals included billions of dollars in public funding. By '96, U.S. state and local governments contributed or pledged US\$15.6 billion toward the building of 73 stadiums and arenas, plus a variety of incentive loan deals, according to a 2002 U.S. study. Fifteen of the 34 arenas that host NHL games were built with at least some public investment.

Practically all of that taxpayer money was justified based on promises of economic growth that simply don't exist, according to Andrew Zimbalist, professor of economics at Smith College in Northampton, Mass., and the author of several books on the business of sports. Those economic myths—propagated by sports owners, supported by politicians, endorsed by sponsors, and maligned whole by local politicians—are built on several misconceptions.

For example, contrary to popular belief, professional leagues are not a huge industry. The four major North American pro sports together account for revenues of up to US\$15 billion a year, according to Zimbalist—less than one-tenth of one per cent of the entire U.S. economy. Though hockey is the dominant sport in Canada, the NHL is the smallest of the four majors, with revenues last year of about \$2.75 billion. If the entire league were considered a single company, it would rank 99th on the list of Canada's biggest corporations by revenue.

Sports teams are not major employers, either. Aside from highly paid players and managers, teams rarely provide low-wage, seasonal jobs to a few hundred people, according to research by University of Washington professor Bill Haynes. When it comes to building stadiums, teams often undertake thousands of construction jobs in projecting economic benefits, but that's misleading. "If you had to close government employment was built around, then government would just have a bunch of people to dig a hole and then hire a bunch more to fill it in," says Zimbalist. "Unfortunately to my people, you have to cut people, and that holds back growth elsewhere in the economy."

That principle applies not just to our cities

but to consumer spending as well. The economists call it "consumer substitution," and it means that if "people aren't paying to see the Maple Leafs play the Canadiens on Sunday night, they'll spend that money on movies, concerts or another sport. Despite the stories about economic hardship, Zimbalist says, there is no doubt the NHL lockout has caused as many commercial sectors to mis-

ery areas. More recently, municipal politicians debated property taxes on Ottawa's Gurdian Centre to facilitate the sale of the Senators to billionaire Eugene Melnyk.

Nor, of this, of course, will really matter to most fans. They just want the game back. It's those fans, and not the players, who've really been locked out this winter. But as long as NHL commissioner Gary



Player agent Trevor Linden (left), Bill Guerin and Daniel Alfredsson are on the season skip away.

If there's any good news in all this, it's that Canadian governments have been less willing to use public money to prop up professional sports than our American cousins have.

When Ottawa proposed a handout to support NHL teams in 2000, the victory was fleeting and the plan was abandoned. That said, Canadian teams do benefit from government generosity. For example, teams rely heavily on revenue from luxury boxes, sold primarily to corporations that then write them off as entertainment expenses. That amounts to an indirect subsidy. And the Ontario government created a new tax deduction in 1999 to ease the burden on

Bettman is talking about some fan discontent change, maybe it's time we asked what's in it for us. Does his vision of a sustainable financial model include slashing ticket prices so someone with an average income can afford to attend a game in Toronto or New York? Not likely.

Thus far, all the talk has focused on the need for more stable financial structure for the game and its owners. What about the public that, in so many cases, has picked up the tab for the teams' multi-million-dollar homes? It's hard to escape the conclusion that all those tax breaks represent the worst kind of corporate welfare, because they fall the critical test of economic development: the money doesn't circulate through the community, it accumulates in the hands of people who don't need the help.

If all we have to look forward to when the NHL returns is more of the same, maybe we shouldn't have a cherry tree in the neighbourhood. The economy doesn't want pro hockey, and taxpayers might be better off without it.

**IT'S** the fans who've really been locked out this winter. Maybe it's time taxpayers asked what's in the NHL for us.

Read Steve March's writing, "Bill Guerin," at [www.cbc.ca/arc/03/03/march](http://www.cbc.ca/arc/03/03/march)





## TELLIER'S LAST STAND

What really pushed the celebrated turnaround artist out Bombardier's door?

WHEN PAUL TELLIER took over the reins of Bombardier Inc. in January 2003, it appeared the family-controlled aerospace and rail giant was finally going to allow an independent board to call the shots. "Wrong. Too bad for Tellier, turnaround artist ousted with 13 months left in his contract. For Canadian taxpayers, who've given billions of dollars to Bombardier and who are now being asked to fork over additional cash, none's the pity."

While the company's initial communications were at best opaque about why Tellier was leaving, industry speculation has been rife with theories as to the reasons the Bombardier family would suddenly ditch its hand-selected CEO. Everyone seems to agree it can't just be that Bombardier, a one-time Canadian success story, has been losing assembly, or that in his 23 months on the

job Tellier was unable to either boost profits or bolster the sagging share price. The Montreal-based giant has fallen so low that bond rating agencies have slapped junk status on its debt. For the family, who've watched the company grow from a humble manufacturer into a respected global manufacturer of planes and trains, that cause has felt like a slap in the face. Still, no one has been blaming Tellier for those woes—and it's not likely they are the reasons he was dumped.

**SOME speculate the issue that split Tellier and Boudoin is whether to embark on a massive venture: a new line of jets.**

That said, even Tellier's successes often involved actions that were difficult for the family to abide. He launched a painful but necessary restructuring program, including embarrassing windowns worth \$2.3 billion. Almost a third of the company's jobs, 22,000 out of 75,000, have been cut since his arrival. He also raised \$1.2 billion by issuing new shares and cut the dividend in half, both slashing the family's holdings and slashing its income. He was instrumental in establishing a more independent board of directors and in making the company more transparent. But Tellier's most controversial move, especially for the nostalgic members of the Bombardier clan, was to sell the poorly performing snowmobile division—the foundation on which J. Armand Bombardier built the company. Still, not only did the family permit the sale, a particu-

lated in the consortium that bought it.

The reason for Tellier's departure given by Laurent Boudoin—son-in-law of the company's founder, Bombardier's executive chairman and now retired player—is a newly created three-person Office of the President—was that Tellier hadn't planned on continuing with the company after his three-year term as CEO was over at the end of 2005. Some read this as a suggestion that Bombardier is about to embark on such a major undertaking that it needs a person at the helm who will commit to a longer term—or that the plan for this new owner have opened an unbridgeable rift between Tellier and Boudoin.

Many observers speculate the area that split the two men was whether to move forward with a new line of jets, called the C-Series, which would carry between 110 and 135 passengers. The market for Bombardier's regional jets is sagging, and the new line is a better fit for short-haul flights, the latest answer to airline woes. However, the project would require a massive upfront investment, and would put Bombardier against industry leaders Boeing and Airbus. Boudoin, who's been with Bombardier for four decades and who led it through a growth spurt in the '90s, is seen as more bullish on these plans than Tellier. "Without the C-Series," says Joseph D'Arcy, a University of Toronto management professor who specializes in the aerospace industry, "Bombardier's aerospace business is not sustainable."

Whatever the cause for Tellier's departure, the result is indisputable: the family is back, finally in charge. And perhaps, observers suggest, that's what was really at issue. In the new president's office with Boudoin in his son, Pierre, who many think is being groomed to take over. Two independent directors followed Tellier out the door with the promise of a non-competition clause, but that leaves the family holding five of the 13 seats, compared to four of 14 before the recent events. Last year, Tellier tried, without success, to reverse the company's ownership, replacing the dual-class share structure that guaranteed family control with a one-share-one-vote system. The voting formula allows the family, which owns 16 per cent of the equity, or less than one-fifth of the business, to call the shots. "If that isn't just, by showing Tellier the exit

The changes at the top have precipitated a crisis of confidence. On the day Boudoin

### BOMBER TAKES A DIVE

THOUGH he failed to revive Bombardier's stock, Tellier had the family's confidence.



BOMBARDIER INC.

Head office: Montreal

Founded in 1942 by J. Armand Bombardier

No. of employees in early 2003 75,000

No. of jets sold since 1985 37,000

Share price at peak in 2002 \$24.30

Share price at Dec. 17 close \$12.05

Boudoin announced that Tellier was out, the stock price fell 173 per cent, to a dismal \$1.11. While the turnaround was taking longer than both Tellier and investors had

expected, the market was still confident in Tellier's ability to improve Bombardier's fortunes, says aerospace analyst Cormier Doherty of Doherty Merchant, a Montreal-based investment firm. Most of the company's problems are due to events out of the CEO's control—notably, the new oil prices and slow recovery of the global aerospace industry after 9/11. "Confidence in the company, which was fragile, is even weaker now that Tellier's gone," Doherty says.

Perhaps this should give politicians pause before they throw new money Bombardier's way. But that doesn't necessarily mean the end. Both Quebec and Ottawa have already indicated they would provide financial help to Bombardier. The federal government is preparing to hand over more than \$300 million to the company as part of a planned bailout of Canada's aerospace industry that could be worth more than \$1 billion.

More than 60 years ago, J. Armand Bombardier wanted to create a vehicle that could "float on snow." He couldn't possibly have imagined the thin ice that lay ahead.

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## A WONDER OF THE WORLD

The Canada Pension Plan is uniquely successful and a model for the U.S.

**AFTER A SPLENDID** evening spent reading *Maclean's* special issue on Canada's history of innovation, it occurred to me that the editors created one uniquely Canadian innovative triumph: a model for effective universal public pension plans or social security schemes. The Canada and Quebec Pension Plans are wonders of the pension world. And one critical aspect of their success—inventing plan members' contributions to appropriate vehicles—may be about to attract more foreign attention.

Once again, this story is rooted in the national dilemma or internal rivalry that the editors describe as a tradition dating back to John A. Macdonald and Louis Riel. Nearly a century later, Ottawa, under Lester B. Pearson's leadership, set out to gain provincial agree-

ment on a national pension scheme. Quebec demurred and announced it was going alone. But, in return for a temporary pledge to waive the long-term cost of the bond market in favour of the provinces, which wanted that space for their own ambitious economy and highway financing, Ottawa got a deal with the other nine provinces. Quebec's role was based primarily on its intention to use the pension fund contri-

butions as a gigantic pool of investments for provincial development, including Hydro-Québec, then about to engage in the massive James Bay hydroelectric project. The *Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec* was created to manage these Quebec funds along with the existing pension plan of the province's public sector employees. In little time, the Caisse became a national, then international, powerhouse.

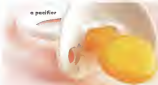
Meanwhile, the 1966 CPP rules restricted it to investing in 20-year bonds issued by the provinces in proportion to their contributions to the fund. As a straight subsidy to the poorer provinces, all provinces paid the same rate on their CPP borrowings, a rate tied to long-term government of Canada bonds.

A review of the two plans seven years later showed that investment returns for the Quebec Plan were running far ahead of the national plan. As part of its deal with the provinces, Ottawa had ceased issuing long-term bonds. That meant that by 1973 just about the only ones left to use the CPP borrowing rate were a trifling lot of those par-centage personal bonds—a Depression-era casualty whose rate was a representative of 1970s-era bond yields and was the comparable price of homes and cars. The CPP Advisory Committee drew this slowness to the attention

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of their health and welfare minister Marc Lalonde. He got Ottawa back into the long-term bond business—and CFP teams scored (full disclosure, your columnist was a member of that advisory committee.)

But over the years, the CFP was still at a disadvantage compared with the QPP because of its inability to invest in equities. That handicap was mopped after Paul Martin became finance minister and ousted the CFP Investors' Board. Under John MacNaughton's leadership, the board has set up a sophisticated program to maximize returns for plan members.

Virtually all global social security schemes outside of Canada rely on lump-sum plan members' contributions with general tax revenues, so pensioners' claims are just part of long-term government liabilities. Those programs are in desperate shape, and the experts agree that by 2020 or earlier, the enormous demands of such untended plans will dominate their economies and financial markets. The only disagreement is where these programs either become sources of their countries' or go bankrupt: Italy, France, Germany and Spain are leaders in the world-wide march to the abyss.

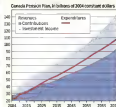
The U.S. will face the same problem two or three decades later. Because no scheme holds only Treasury bonds, its returns are skewed. In 1988, I testified before the U.S. Senate Finance Committee about Social Security's funding problems. Afterwards, the hearing's chairman, legendary New York Democrat Patrick Moynihan, chimed with me about the "million" that the huge dark of the national debt held in the Social Security Trust Fund, which was modeled on the CFP fund, was a genuine sustainable pension fund. Over time, Mr. Moynihan said, the best returns for pension funds would have to come not from mid-term government debt (five years or so, the bond held for Social Security) but from stocks.

We agreed that the ideal program would involve equity ownership, but understood the argument that the government could not control corporate America. Right-wing opponents screamed that this would be a "Lamarie" takeover. This is not a problem for CFP and QPP because they, unlike most foreign plans, don't raise assets themselves to fund investments.

Brief George W. Bush fresh from his re-election triumph, Bush plans to introduce

## NORTHERN CASH FLOW

Unless changes are made, the U.S. pay-as-you-go Social Security system is projected to run out of money in 2042. The picture is more north-of-the-border, where past embezzled CFP contributions and socializing investment assets are keeping the plan in the black.



Source: Statistics Canada, "Canada Pension Plan: A Financial Review, 2004-2042," published in the Report of the Canada Pension Plan Review, 2004, published by the Government of Canada, Ottawa, 2004.

legislation permitting younger workers to set aside a portion of their Social Security contributions (fully taxed) in personal investment accounts, which would include longer-term government bonds (but pay higher interest rates than mid-term bonds) plus equities, long-term funds in the investment vehicles. Such an approach wouldn't let these investors die of their own stockpiling, thereby growing a thorn in participating

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But, given the realities of the U.S. political process, it's as close as he can get to Canada's successful approach. And he can use our good fortune in showing why market-based investing generates higher returns, thereby protecting Social Security from taking over the economy, going bust or back.

The President, because of poor Social Security returns (compared to stocks), looks to be in for a deeper hole. As the President's fairly a flesh-cheering section) notes, his plan would, in the long run, after all hope of success. The magazine accused John Kerry's demagogic insistence on doing nothing to temper with the program, which has shown us how it receives radical therapy. However, few observers think Bush has much hope of getting

Congress, deeply divided in this issue, to jumpstart the "Third Rail of politics," as Social Security has long been labelled.

Why has Canada been so successful in untangling what others have failed?

First, because Ottawa couldn't do it on its own. It needed to get approval from the provinces, in a tedious process, and holdout Quebec was able to experiment with a unique funding process that worked.

Second, because Canada didn't start in review process, so the program of its plans was open to public scrutiny on a regular basis.

Third, Canada's shared secular religion is a faith in major social programs, and faith-based institutions have a greater chance of success than those born in cynicism or corrupt politics.

Maybe you don't agree with these suggested reasons for our strong performance. But give Canada credit for successful innovation—and successful management—of a program that is one of the two overarching challenges facing all governments in this century.

The secret, of course, is health care. Oh well, you can't win 'em all!

George-Louis Bédard, CMAA, is Global Portfolio Strategist, CMAA Financial Group, Quebec, Quebec.

# CHILDREN OF WAR

Not enough help is available for a wave of especially troubled young arrivals, writes CYNTHIA REYNOLDS

**"HERE WE GO AGAIN."** That's what Gwen Taylor, a middle school teacher in Windsor, thought when Katie, a five-foot-six, 10-year-old African refugee, would start rilling around on the floor during lessons. Although frequent, it was not the child's only bizarre behaviour. One day, she threw her desk; on another occasion she head-butted Taylor. Sometimes she would loudly berate the boy beside her for no reason. Katie was one of those kids teachers dread and students shun, but Taylor's perspective shifted when she heard about Katie's background. When the girl was a young child in Nigeria, armed rebels attacked her family's home. Her frantic mother shoved her under a bed, from where she

watched her father being slaughtered. For Taylor, knowing about Katie's past helped explain her disruptive behaviour, but it didn't make managing it any easier. "Sometimes I was supposed to know how to handle this—and take care of 25 other children!" says Taylor (her name and Katie's are pseudonyms). "Crying just wasn't enough. I felt like I was a failure."

While teachers have long had to integrate refugees into their classrooms, Katie, one of over 6,000 child refugees who came to Canada yearly, was among the first of a new cluster working its way through the Canadian school system. These students hail from Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia, from places where little to no English is spoken and the cultures are far different. Often, prolonged war has disrupted their education—which such students are ripe, watching families being murdered, or having forced to be child soldiers have left lasting trauma. "The system is just not prepared for this," says Taylor.

Worship social worker Jan Smith's explains. She's one of a handful in the country studying the problem of war-affected refugee children in the classroom. An Ontario arm to

disaster newscenter focuses beyond the big crisis to smaller crises like the Maccabiah capital—which took in more than 1,200 refugees in 2003—Smith sees more and more unprepared teachers trying to cope. "They were really struggling with how difficult it was for these children to settle down and be in a classroom with others," she says. Even seemingly benign tasks could elicit an outburst: asking a student to get him line might cause an emotional meltdown if, say, terrible things had happened after soldiers made people in their village line up.

Smith remembers one teacher who, in trying to ease better for a 12-year-old boy from Sierra Leone, moved him closer to her desk. This put the boy in a high-traffic area; when his classmates walked by, he lashed out at them. The teacher eventually discovered the boy had spent time in a refugee camp, where he had to protect his food from thieves. "It's such varied potential if these children are seen as troubled kids," says Smith, who advocates special counsel for teachers that inform them of what war-affected children may have endured. "If they've grown up with fear, it's going to take a long time for them to settle



down and feel safe. If their basic needs are met and they feel safe in the schools, though, we can make a huge difference."

But it's the basics that schools are failing to provide. Deep cuts nationwide through the '90s all but gutted the key program aiding refugee kids—English-as-a-second-language education. People for Education, an Ontario lobby group, discovered that of the 76 per cent of urban elementary schools in Ontario that had ESL students, only 26 per cent had ESL teachers. The disparity, which exists in other provinces, including Alberta and B.C., is one of the contributing factors to a dropout rate for ESL students that can be as high as 75 per cent, with war-affected refugees among the most at risk. Experts now fear the erosion of an underclass, with all the risks—underemployment, crime, mental illness, dependence on social assistance—that accompany it.

**IT'S EARLY** Tuesday morning, but Toronto's Centennial Centre for Victims of Torture is already full. The number of young people the centre deals with, whether they've been tortured directly or are trying to cope with a family member's trauma, has been growing, from 54 in 2003 to 122 as of last March. For these youth, the centre offers not only ESL, but therapy.

Moussa Kato has been a regular GGVT client since he arrived in Toronto four years ago. He doesn't want to look like "a refugee," he describes himself as a student. The look says Kato will pay no mind to his father, who was brutally murdered, and thus he doesn't know the fate of his mother, sister and brother. Unless you look at his eyes. "I don't sleep well," he says, "but they are always red." They are always swelling, too, swelling for someone following him, for people considering if he's built he hasn't been able to shake.

Kato is from Guinea, a small country bordering on both Sierra Leone and Liberia, two of Africa's more notorious war zones. In 2000, rebels from both countries began targeting his village (Kato's home was also attacked), making food, burning houses and murdering. Kato's father had become active in Guinea's political opposition, but government soldiers put a stop to that one night. "They beat him, burned him, and then they killed my father," says Kato, who was then 13. "I went home and the house was burned." Hearing he was next, he fled to Toronto at his uncle's urging, with a phone

Katie, whose father was murdered, fled his home country of Nigeria

icker purchased by one of his father's friends. Rita, fluent in three languages but with no English, was placed in foster care and sent to school. His worn clothes donated by a local church—like the grey “old-style” vest he sported on the first day of school, an outfit that garnered ridicule but which he now recalls with a big smile. Despite nightmares about his family and the stress of not knowing what happened to them, Rita has excelled. He graduated from high school in 2003 and now works two jobs, volunteers in his community teaching computer skills to inner-city youth, and has received a \$4,000 scholarship for his post-secondary education—although he is still waiting to see how Osama will rule on his refugee claim.

With more young people like Rita seeking help, the CCVT, which has traditionally focused on adult needs, is expanding its youth program. It aims to educate teachers on the symptoms that war-affected kids exhibit—hyper-alertness, an inability to sit still or concentrate, sudden inexplicable outbursts, and aggressive or withdrawn behavior. The CCVT also wants to be a resource for teachers to call when they see the signs and need someone to provide students with support and get them talking about their past. “With children, verbalization is much more difficult—they need a safe environment to be themselves,” says Afshaz Shafiq, the CCVT’s children and youth program counsellor and art therapist. She shows a picture drawn by an eight-year-old boy, of a drooping pink flower, beside it a sword, behind it a depiction of red speckled bottles. “Many of these children have lost their trust in humanity,” she says.

Trust is harder to restore in former child soldiers. Ataf 1998—the latest figures available—there were 106,000 fighting in 36 countries. Then the CCVT sees an ex-fighter extremely aggressive at among the quitters and from withdrawn war-affected kids—in the latter case behaviour that makes them least likely to receive help. “In general, if a child starts quietly, teachers are more likely to pass that child up through the quitters,” says child psychiatrist Dr. Marlene Fromm-Jensen, chief of psychiatry for the Toronto District School Board. “For child soldiers, it’s hard to bring me what they must be going through trying to adjust to a normal life in the classroom.”

**WORLDWIDE:** there are about 9.7 million refugees, about three million of them in UN



His painting depicting small red speckled bottles hints at the trauma one child soldier

ran refugee camps. There was often no school. Shamsat Euse, 33, a former Eritrean refugee who now counsels other new arrivals in 9/11-ridden, tells of a 15-year-old Indonesian girl who arrived in Canada last year. Born in a camp, she was illiterate, but she was still smart enough to Grade 10. “They were talking about velocity and acceleration,” says Euse. “She just stared at the teachers and smiled. She began to dread going to school.”

### DEEP CUTS all but gutted the key program aiding refugee kids—English-as-a-second-language education

But what else could they do? They couldn’t put her in Grade 1.”

For some students, programs like homework clubs, peer tutoring and one-on-one learning sessions have helped. The EMCA in Halifax offers this type of funds on help for refugees and other immigrants in these schools. But the agency is now encountering some of the largest education gaps it has ever seen—especially among girls, and especially those from Afghanistan. But, says Sudhakar Rana Francis, “Even if they’ve had minimal education, the girls are as eager to

learn. From elementary to high school, they will sit with you until they get it, no matter how much time it takes.”

But other factors work against academic success. There’s the stress of parental pressure to succeed, the strain of balancing part-time jobs to help with household expenses, the clash between cultures. Not to mention a move—an especially troubling problem for Muslim students after 9/11. Francis recalls one girl, a victim of verbal abuse, crying that she wanted to go home—to the haven of Afghanistan. “There will always be other staff or other students who view immigrants and refugees as intruders,” says Francis. “So, yeah, if these kids are stressed out, it’s going to impact on their performance.” In other words, adjusting to life in Canada can also be very damaging to a child’s psyche—one reason why the EMCA is lobbying Citizenship and Immigration Canada, which provides funding for only general refugee programs, to acknowledge that young people have different resettlement needs.

In Winnipeg, it could help certainly benefited Rita, who blossomed when Taylor was able to give her one-on-one time. Rita has since changed schools, but Taylor has heard she is doing better. “When she looks back on her experience, she does so with mixed emotions: ‘In some ways I’ve been blessed to work with these kids. And in others I’ve as frustrated—and you don’t even know what to be frustrated with. It’s just mind boggling, to try to get help for a child.’”



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## HOOKED ON CRIME

Vancouver crooks are meeting to talk about their compulsion to be lawless

IT'S TUESDAY EVENING, 7 p.m., and the last of the stragglers takes his seat. The lights in the Salvation Army dining hall are extinguished, candles are lit. A dozen men and one woman sit around a rectangle of tables waiting for Sean Mingo to start tonight's meeting. It's doubtful anywhere in Vancouver tonight there is a larger gathering of career criminals, at least outside the prison system. There are no George Clooneys or Brad Pitts here, none of the slick fan of a cyber flick like *Ocean's Twelve*. This is all business. The men range from their 20s to their 50s, and dress down-as to jailhouse hard. The women, under 50s,

has a son up for robbery. They've got no proof, she says. The men and politely, like they've never heard that one before. The air smells of strong coffee. People drop coins into a cup marking the rounds. "My name is Sean," says the burly guy at the head of the table. "I have a crime addiction."

With that, Mingo begins another weekly

meeting of the founding chapter of Crime Addiction Anonymous—dedicated to the controversial premise that crime can be an illness as transitory as dependency on alcohol or drugs. The program was founded by Mingo, who wound up almost a year ago at the Salvation Army's

"We never get high or drunk, just hang out with a hookah." Mingo says.

Platour Light detox and recovery centre in the city's hard-luck Downtown Eastside. He was addled by crack cocaine, and ground down by bone-deep and darker about his abilities as a master criminal. He's spent more than half his 50 years in jail, for robberies, narcotics, attempted murder, as well as trafficking and small-time drug. Prison patrons cover his upper torso like an ill-matched criminal camouflage vest. The prob-

lem, he explains, is crime can be thrilling. "It's fun to go in and rob a bank. It's a trip, man. It's power trip to rob anybody, even with a knife in a back alley." There were a few limits. He

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### ALPHA females | Embrace the gym, keep breast cancer at bay

Lapgenitro is one of 134 Alberta women helping test an emerging theory

Olive Lapgenitro sees an opportunity in change, and perhaps even save, her life. The 45-year-old Edmonton schoolteacher caught a recruitment ad on TV for a study on how exercise helps prevent breast cancer. Researchers wanted women, aged 55 to 74, who had no previous cancer diagnosis and led sedentary lives. And would be put into a 12-month exercise program, while the other half would make no change to their lifestyle. Lapgenitro, 55, was keen to get into the first group. For years, she had tried, unsuccessfully, to lose weight through diets and sporadic exercise. And recently, a heart-timed sense of mortality had set in. Both her parents were 73 when they passed away.

As part of the so-called ALPHA Trial, being run by the University of Alberta in Edmonton and the University of Calgary, Lapgenitro now exercises five times a week, 45 minutes per session, often with a trainer provided by the research team. Her workouts include time on a treadmill and stationary bike. "I haven't lost weight, but there's a

hint at a waistline," she jokes, "so the fat has shifted."

The pilot is that Lapgenitro's fitness push will benefit others as well. By February, 134 women will be enrolled in the study, only the second of its kind (a smaller one originated in Seattle in 1999). But other research has suggested exercise reduces the risk of breast cancer in older women by 40 to 50 per cent. The first step to explain why.

A key factor is estrogen, which post-menopausal women produce in fat cells rather than the ovaries. As high estrogen levels can trigger breast cancer, reducing fat may help ward off the disease. As well, for invading cancer cells to thrive, they must escape the immune system's natural killer cells, which exercise can stimulate.

Kerry Coombs, a medical investigator with the ALPHA Trial, says research focusing on post-menopausal females because they are 20 times more likely than younger women to develop breast cancer. Also, along with age, lifestyle is thought to be a key factor. Coombs, a physical education professor at the U of A, says exercise is a good idea anytime, but one of the encouraging early findings is that even women who only get active late in life have a better chance of staying healthy.

BRIAN DESSMAN

## FINDINGS

### CELEBRITY

After months of enduring his best-selling author to drag Celine Dion, guest Photo 94, has now conceded the popular performer—in the same class as Madonna, who was pulled from the market in September—may have contributed to heart attacks. An independent trial in the U.S. found cancer patients taking up to 400 mg of Celebrex daily had 2.5 times as many serious heart incidents as those in a placebo. However, a separate cancer study found no heart problems in patients taking 400 mg a day.

### HEART SOCK

Heart doctors have come up with a kind of patchwork support for men with serious heart disease, a mesh stocking that wraps around the heart to help squeeze it back into shape. Tested on about 150 patients, the device can return hearts that have been weakened and deformed by a heart attack to normal size and put off the need for a transplant or other interventions, surgeons said.



### SMOKING BARS

Smoking bars seem to be helping nicotine addicts cut back, perhaps even quit, Toronto researchers suggest. They found that in places with bars, 50 per cent of workers smoked, compared to an average of 25.4 cigarettes a day, which is less than the national average. By contrast, where there were no bars, 40 per cent of employees were daily smokers, averaging 25.1 a day.





## KID STUFF

## CHICKEN POX

An international gathering of immunologists urged wider use of chicken pox vaccines, a standard in only five provinces during the vaccine, they say, would cut down significantly on the 100 or so hospitalizations a year in Canada, as well as the growing incidence of hepatitis disease among children, for which chicken pox is often a precursor. The bad news: The virus from the vaccine can trigger a nerve crisis and, in some instances, cause the painful condition shingles in adults.



## REALLY SUGGS

This high-tech pacifier is designed to help preemies learn how to suck, swallow and breathe, so they can better tolerate. Designed by two U.S. engineers, with help from speech pathologist Dr. Carol Walker at the University of Alberta, the multi-level Acclisor keeps track of a number of respiratory functions and, it's hoped, will train the brains of the very premature. Long-term studies are planned to see if the device can boost IQ and promote language skills, which are often underdeveloped in preemies.

## LIGHT SLEEP

Newborns who get a good dose of daylight in the afternoon turn into good sleepers and seem to sleep that way, a British study just discovered. Her theory is that natural sunlight sets the biological clock that allows babies to sleep through the night, and the earlier it is set, the better for all concerned.



## SEPARATION ANXIETY

By all odds, it was Canadian doctors working in April 2006 who first saw a mother who ended up delivering a pair of identical twins. That, and the fact that the two brothers were not joined at the front or back—which makes separation extremely difficult—probably helped speed them to Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children for a potentially life-saving operation. It also helped that SickKids has a special fund to cover

the surgery. Four-month-old Toronto and Toronto, share a liver, but doctors believe it is large enough to be divided. Sick Kids surgeons have successfully separated a pair of nine sets of conjoined twins, but worldwide, the survival rate beyond age 2 after such operations is 1 in 20 per cent.

## Elder care | Up close and academic

It's one of Canada's most unusual degree programs, and not just because it's up to 10 people being watched in a gymnasium and wrestling with dementia or Alzheimer's. Based at Sheridan College in Oakville, Ont., its claim to fame is that it is drawing in students from an increasingly wide variety of disciplines, not getting there, is part of their studies, to help make the world of the elderly safer, healthier and, frankly, more interesting. Cosmetics students taking makeup sessions are boosting the mood and self-esteem of the older women, staff say. Animating students have helped change the "dicer" "little things came up," says director Pat Spadofora, "like that certain citizens look better through the yellowed lenses of an older eye."

At the Sheridan Elder Research Centre, which opened a year ago, the day program's clients do age appropriate crafts, work on puzzles or discuss current affairs in front of a class. Instructors, who will be observed by academics via microphones and video cameras. Research is broadly

"This daycare program for seniors suffering from dementia or Alzheimer's is aimed at improving the lives of the elderly."

aimed at helping seniors, both healthy ones and those with dementia, cope better with daily life. By finding improvements in product designed over little things like signage. "Not just people developing dementia drugs," says Spadofora, a former social worker, "but you also need to look at how best to support those who need help." And the big question the centre would like answered: Can drop-in programs like this slow the ravages of a killing mind?

Spadofora hopes to draw in more and more healthy seniors, by offering classes in Internet skills or setting up social groups for those with poor vision, in order to have a broader group on which to test new ideas. That should also bring in more students. "Not a lot of cosmeceutics students come to Sheridan because they want to work with older adults," says Spadofora. "But we break down ageist attitudes one person at a time."

KAREN HANLEY

## Does heartburn wake you up at night?



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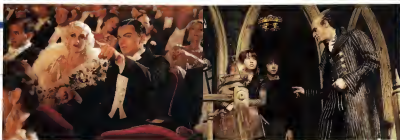




Amelunke, then created a cinematic answer to D. Seligman vs. The Royal Trusthouse. But *The Life Aquatic* is a total disappointment. As Zimoa, Murray plays a stoned, washed-up director and documentary maker who's a kind of cartoon Joe-Joe Cassanova. Angilee Hinton portrays Zimoa's laid-back, bearded fiancée, and co-writer Owen Wilson shows up as a jillet who may or may not be his son. The film is riddled with cut-ins and pieces that don't add up to much. As for Murray, the pained expression on his face suggests he's high too far to make it.

**Million Dollar Baby** If you decide to get into the ring with this boxing movie, be warned: director Clint Eastwood will pamper you with some punches to the heart. There's the sweetly naive (Hilary Swank), a lonely one who's literally fighting her way out of a "trash" background by training day and night (on the back, no less—ever since she's almost too old, at 31, to be a contender. Certainly making the *generosity* of her long-lost "daddy," the faded amateur, one of the *Pro Wrestler* Oscar favorites [Eastwood is the kind of crazy old manner with these *cinema* who inhibits us more against all odd-adult movies. Turns out he's desperately in need of a daughter, since for reasons never divulged—his biological one may have a thing to do with this. Then there's the fellow old one, played so many times before by Morgan Freeman, whose once-over-a-laden-within would the "dream" and "image." And finally there's Morgan's family nightmare of a career: a half-brother, a bunch of other children, welfare-cheating beliefs, and "fat"—as they proceed on to an *end success*.

This reviewer emerged from 30 rounds of exasperation pretty much unscathed. A raspy-voiced, drabbed-down Swank is off-limits as the lady's boss; her Maggie is a stocky-mom-Mother Teresa cliché (she's generous to a fault with her money grabbing family, and then over her opponent's [sister]); The whole movie is a heap of stereotypes, including the fact that the bad dean is Franciscan (being in Catholic faith—until a crisis puts it to the Ultimate Test). Long before that I'd stopped believing. PH



hope, after all, has always been part of the Hollywood scenery. **EDL**

A *Very Long Engagement* After the millifollicle confessions of *Annie*, director Jean-Pierre Jeunès, the mad puppy-dog of French cinema, backs—with the more wide-eyed star, Audrey Tautou, and the same sin for a longer while, according to the actors and a top-fury storybook style. Once again the king is bigger than the state, with a *swave* narrative getting more linear than all the characters combined. But *A Very Long Engagement* is far more ambitious than *Annie*, with more dramatic weight to affect the where

Based on Schindler Jerriquet's novel, it's set years after the First World War. Marcelline (Duclos) has been told by Raoul, Marianne (Caugier Uffet), was one of five women who French soldiers who were courted, married and sent out to certain death in no man's land. But she refuses to believe it, embarking on a quest to find him. Her flashback scenes connect one of the most extraordinary portraits of trench warfare ever filmed—a quarterly census of winter, mud and blood that evokes Dostoevsky and Goya while retaining a horrific realism. The rest of the movie Marcelline's odyssey, is a Borgeesian chase to survive. And at the heart of it is Thérèse, who's like a silent film star, letting the movie reveal itself through her eyes. **B+**

[illegible]

Hammer's at sea in *The Life Aquatic*: DeCaprio (top, with Steve McQueen) reteams as Hambo

graciously cyranoid—birth doesn't matter—more so that Owen's Elvira, even though at this time "round the corner given way to a needlessly convoluted one." It's been 35 years since Danny Devito (George Clooney), Rusty Ryan (Brad Pitt) and their buds landed casino owner Terry Benedict (Alfred Garcia) of \$160 million. Now Benedict wants his money back, or else. The story of how the guys, all going straight, use the casino to scam an effort to bring the real deal in to turn a really big business around the plectrum of Amsterdam, Paris, Monte Carlo, Las Vegas, Rome and Sicily. And with Devito and Tess (Quinn) settled down, another babe, (also dubbed Lolita) Catherine Zeta-Jones, enters the fray to promote some heat. But Roberts isn't the showman

her character's called upon to assassinate a certain Hollywood actress with a starburst smile. It's all a light, bright palette cleanser after a dark dinner. **FM**

**In Good Company** Dan (Dennis Quaid) is an advertising sales manager for a magazine. After a commercial-gone-gone sales presentation, he is fired. He then finds his new job in his backseat, at \$1 Dan loses his job in a 36-year-old towed garage (Timothy Dalton). The white kid, who knows nothing about sales, reads his name (marking cellphones to youngsters). Dan reluctantly agrees to stay on as Carter's "selling man" with his wife pregnant and his toddler daughter, Alice (Scarlett Johansson), moving to a high-priced school, he has little choice. His first job is to downsize staff—i.e. fire his friends. But the director's blow comes when

## SOUR, SWEET AND SPELLBINDING

The misfortunes of the three Sanderson orphans are now as well-known as those of their British counterpart, Harry Potter. The 11, alternative title is *A Scorn of Unluckiness*.

Executives Lemony Snicket (J.K.A. Daniel Hand ler) have sold 27 million copies to children and adults—beginning with the hilariously macabre stories of *Violet, Klaus and Sunny*. After their parents' death in a fire, the children are abandoned from one incompetent relative to another, and relentlessly pursued for their inheritance by evil Count Olaf. A big budget, big-name Hollywood version was used to

And what a version it is: Director Brad Silberling takes apart the first three *Silence* volumes to make a novel very different in its storyline but still attuned to the spirit of the books. Silberling is aided by a script that presents the adulterous horror at Hester's prison and, above all, by Carey as the villainous Gile. Playing a ham actor fond of reptile disguises actually demands Carey's brand of outrageous mugging. Dressed as a cold sea captain and muttering in a mock-Newfoundland accent, Del will be the heart

of Aunt Josephine (Meryl Streep) with such gusto as, "Sure I got the good parking spot, but who could love a man with a wooden leg and a face like a beer's urse?"

The film has a wonderfully rendered Edwardian-esque look in the characters' late-19th-century clothing, though they drive cars from 50 years ago and speak like it's 2009. And there are witty visual jokes throughout. After Claf, who has kidnapped Uncle Monty's real assistant, assures Monty the man "would give anything to be here," the film briefly flashes to the screaming assistant chained to the front of a speeding locomotive.

What remains unchanged is the moral core of the stories. The kinfolkers are cheerful in the face of adversity, brave, resourceful and caring. Adults are of their well-meaning but ineffectual, or evil and slightly more capable. Best of all, people, besides the children's caregivers, far prefer listening to them. Lemony Snicket might be aghast to hear it, but Brad Schifano has managed to make a satirically entertaining, darkly comic film with an anti-life message.

Written and directed by Paul Weitz (*Mean Girls*), *In Good Company* is a formula picture, but better than most: Quaid is well cast as a high-strung exec who rolls with a sense of violated decency; you can almost see his blood pressure rise. Grace (*That '70s Show*) strikes a skanky balance between nervous

invest and precious confidence. As usual, Johnson seems to exist in his own world as a blithe observer who knows more than she lets on. What's surprising is that Cowperjony devotes way more time to the glib details of downsizing than to reassessing the firm's authority, which collapses with a more cracking than and life has to offer—but false





## TEMPER-TANTRUM BLUES

The stranger's rage was upsetting, but I let it bother me for far too long

**WHAP!** He flinches and ducks, too late, in that useless but typical reflex after being hit without warning. "What the hell?" he wonders. Scolding indignantly in the airplane aisle after the flight had landed, he'd been worrying about whether his luggage would arrive, not about getting hit on the head. The agent of the smack is obvious—the door on the overhead bin has dropped down. But so he turns around, the real culprit is just as obvious. Two rows back a woman leans on the back of a seat, laughing.

She must be the one who didn't hit the door properly, he thinks, but then pushing him

over the edge of self-control. He launches into a verbal assault, not caring who hears him. Warning everyone to hear, maybe. He must include a demand to know what's wrong with her—a the willfully careless or just stupid? What kind of person is she, that she thinks it's funny to hurt people?

He draws breath to continue, but she first starts to snore and he turns and goes with it. The woman snorts then, not laughing anymore: he has that consolation, at least, the moans to one side, and lets the rest of the passengers go ahead.

He leaves the plane, still seething. His wife has come to meet him as they wait for his luggage, he tells her the story. Then that woman yells at him and he glares at her again. What an insensitive bitch. Imagine her laughing at him! The incident has marred his day, but at least he told her what he thinks of her.

Whap! I flinch and duck, too late, in that useless but typical reflex after being hit without warn-

ing. I look up. The door on the overhead bin, the one I thought I had just touched shut, has fallen open, sending me on the head. The woman behind me looks back, concerned. "Are you okay?" she asks. Then on the seat back, chuckling rucfully, shaking my head sideways. I'm not seriously hurt, just startled. With my head down, I hear him before I see him. He's yelling at someone, with some surprise I realize he's yelling at me. "What the hell?" I wonder. I stand there, stupidly, as he trumps up one side of me and down the other. I can't speak—not to apologize, not to explain my laughter (of my half friend

should be so dignified), not to explain that I, too, was hit.

Hamilton burns my face. I feel sick, having provoked such fury. Leaving the airplane dead last, I stop in the bathroom to wash my face, trying to regain some composure. Even so, I haven't washed enough time and I see him again near the luggage carousel where. Any idea I might have had of trying to retrieve the situation dies when I see the look on his face. Even the woman with him is glaring at me.



It's been 10 years since this gentlemanly arrival in Ottawa and I can still hear the anger in his voice, see the frown on his face, feel the flip-flopping of my stomach. I've often thought of what I should have said, how I might have explained what happened, or even just apologized, instead of standing there, silenced by his trade. I've wondered whether the other passengers saw what happened, or took me for a colossal and careless fool. It's been 10 years, and I'm still carrying that dry day with me. I wonder whether he is, too.

The Zen tradition tells a story about two

Buddhist monks who came to a river in spring flood. A young woman is standing there, desperate to get to the other side but unable to cross. Although contact with women is forbidden, one of the monks picks her up and carries her across the river: a broken rule, but a good deed. He and his fellow monk walk on for an hour. Suddenly, the other monk says, "We are forbidden contact with women." The first monk replies, "I put her down an hour ago. Why are you still carrying her?"

Why, indeed? And why am I still carrying that dry? In honour of the 10th anniversary of that ill-fated flight, I barely put down that day. I put down his incendiary reaction to a relatively minor offense. I put down my own defensiveness and recurring anguish over my inability to defend myself, or even to defuse the situation. I put down my frustration at never knowing whether my fellow passengers saw the incident from his perspective or from mine. I don't need to carry any of that any longer.

There is just one thing that I will try to carry with me, one thing worth carrying: a commitment to not speaking in anger. It's a commitment I can't of the same knowledge of how easy it is to misunderstand a situation, how easy it is to feel self-righteous while believing

badly. It's a commitment bolstered by the painful knowledge that I have not always been the one left wondering, stupidly marveled, I have also been the one lashing out.

The only thing we can control is what we don't say. The speaker is not a Buddhist monk but a practicing Catholic, a slightly redneck but strongly Liberal Albertan, a friend always full of surprises. Like an drinking and everything, wisdom can be found in our every everyday encounter with the unexpected.

Isabel Gibson lives in Ottawa. To contribute, write to isabel@canoe.ca

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## Money's Worth | Canadian icewines

### Homegrown holiday cheer with a sweet finish

Traditionally served as an after-dinner digestif, icewine has finally achieved staple status for home holiday entertaining. Served with fresh fruit, a tart dessert, or simply on their own, these sweet sipping wines are a festive finish to any yuletide meal. And when it comes to finding a magnificent bottle, you don't have to look any further than Canadian soil. "Icewine is something we consistently do at a world-class level," says Christopher Watson, managing editor of *Wine magazine*. Ontario's Niagara Peninsula and B.C.'s Okanagan Valley offer the ideal climes for cultivating vital, crisp and gregarious grapes, which are picked at temperatures of roughly -10°C. Then, it's a race to squeeze out the inky crimson droplets of juice for fermentation—before freezing causes the fruit's sugar levels to dilute. For the summer grapes harvested, the overall yield is tiny, which is why the slender bottles carry such hefty price tags. The taste, however, makes it all worthwhile. Canada's only true competitor in this category is Germany, but comparable icewine will strain your wallet even more. No wonder John Sheeler and Bradley Gutter, authors of *The Wall Street Journal* Guide to Wine, list wine from Canada as "the perfect present this year." Interestingly, this because what is being pushed to make cocktails (icewine martinis anyone?) and its palate-tasting benefits. We sampled four of this year's award-winning vintages. (LISA BOWEN)



**OUR PICK:** While this beautiful vintage is a well-deserved award winner, it's not the best value. This 2002 Vidal is the best value. The "Master of the Glass" description on its label is well-deserved.

## What's in store

Icewines made with red grapes instead of white are quickly gaining in popularity. Birchwood Estate Winery's award-winning 2002 Cabernet Estate Winery (CIS \$1,360) offers bursts of sweet berry fruits. And Ironbark's 2003 Cabernet Franc (CIS \$1,309) delivers the taste of chocolate and wine.



**THE VERDICT:** Canadian icewine is a luxury you can't ignore, but a good bottle is worth every penny. Whether your taste buds love the sweetness and texture or the boldness and tang, the Niagara Peninsula and Okanagan Valley are the first regions in which to begin your search.

WINES OF THE MONTH	WINES OF THE MONTH	WINES OF THE MONTH	WINES OF THE MONTH
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**TIP:** Icewine is a sweet, dessert wine. It's not a good idea to drink it with a meal. It's best enjoyed on its own, or with a light dessert.

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## ON SNOW, SKIING—AND FUN

The slopes may have defeated our rental car, but they didn't defeat us

**MOST SKIERS** don't run into trouble on slopes until they're actually wearing skis. I managed to beat the rush.

If you take one wrong turn between Ottawa and Mont Tremblant, you wind up in a rural Quebec fantasyland where narrow roads wind their way through frozen, snow-covered forests. Last week the road was snow-crusted too. I tried to guide our dinky little rental car up a gently sloping hill. We got halfway up, then slid back down. I tried again. The little car couldn't do it. Christmas, the real driver in the couple, got behind

the wheel while I pushed the car from behind. No luck. So we enjoyed the scenery of rural Quebec for a half hour until a snowplow passed.

To Tremblant then, and the ski slopes, a little behind schedule. Too much Ottawa is not good for the brain or body. Time to make all the spare-time bits.

I should pause to emphasize that your correspondent is no great athlete. All my life, handling and manipulating and achieving were for other people. I would say at home, handled-up wires, and guard the nerves.

But five years ago I covered the Carnaval de Québec and was convinced that snow and fun are not necessarily antagonistic concepts. A year later—no more rushing—I packed my courage and anxiety out of long johns into suitcase and headed to Mont St-Anne, east of Quebec City, for six lessons. I was operating on the principle that as a later starter I should get as far as possible away from anyone I might know.

The trip produced two big surprises—snow, really.

- For a lifetime devotee of the non-hurting(s), actually had a chance for skiing.
- It's fun.

Trips to Tremblant, north of Montreal, and Whistler, north of Vancouver, crashed that winter and the next. Now, it's important not to overemphasize by "a chance for skiing." I mean only that I kept the number of embarrassing falls down to one or two a day. I gingerly enjoyed the easy slopes



Illustration by [unintelligible]

Green and blue runs, as we say in the business. No black diamonds for me. Still, it's good to get out.

One very old habit set in. For my column the default mode is scribbling and in-servicing. For two winters in a row I stayed at home, handled-up wires, guarding the senses. It took a lot of will to pack the long johns, rent the scary car and head for the hills.

Once the scenery car had actually made it to Tremblant, I was on the mountain within an hour, private teacher in tow. Lessons cost money, but knocking out the front door at home to make room for a wheelchair would cost more.

Ski instructors are an impressively optimistic lot, and at the heart of their optimism is the conviction that you have enough room in your brain to assimilate all their advice while you are having downhill. From my Monday farmhouse I learned to pretend I was

squeezing a dense with my integ and turn. I learned to reach my knees as I turned, to resist myself which leg should be doing the work. (The short answer: never the leg you were thinking about.) I learned to keep my shoulders and legs (I had been punched in the stomach. I learned to keep the "fall line" in mind and that the "fall line" is the line I will fall down if I let gravity defeat ingenuity, as it threatened to do in every moment.

From my Tuesday teacher, a cheerful and absurdly graceful older man named Pierre Charbonneau, I learned to think about each leg toe in turn as I wound my way down hill. I learned to relax my shoulders as though I had been hung by the neck from a coat hook.

And the funniest thing happened, harking at first but with increasing frequency to the week were on.

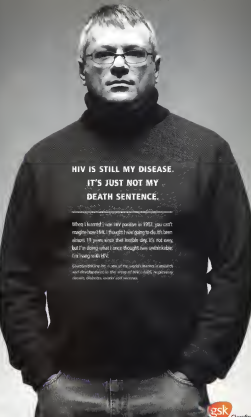
Carving down the mountain, squeezing a dense and clanking about my toes, simultaneously punched in the stomach and hung from a coat hook, I floated past the absurdity of a fall and discovered, to my astonishment, that I was skiing.

Charbonneau gave way to blue. But give way, just once, to a black diamond. The same techniques apply as the slopes get steeper. You just have to trust them, which means trusting yourself.

At one point, on a long run of gentle slope, Pierre showed me how to do back words. Turning around was simplicity itself. Turning back, for me at least, was impossible. Nobody's perfect. Rolling down didn't hurt at all.

By the end of the third day my thighs were roaring in protest, but I made with it just long enough to follow Christmas as the followed Pierre, slowly, beautifully, down Mont Tremblant. She wasn't sure she could do it, I never had any doubts. Slopes may defeat our rental car, but we would not let them defeat us. 

To connect: backpage@madison.ca  
about Paul Wells's writing: "delicious words,"  
at [www.madison.ca/paulwells](http://www.madison.ca/paulwells)



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